

1 **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING UTAH**

2 **HONOR FLIGHT PROGRAM**

3 2018 GENERAL SESSION

4 STATE OF UTAH

5 **Chief Sponsor: Jani Iwamoto**

6 House Sponsor: Paul Ray

8 **LONG TITLE**

9 **General Description:**

10 This concurrent resolution of the Legislature and the Governor recognizes the Utah
11 Honor Flight Program for sponsoring trips that allow Utah veterans to experience their
12 war memorials in the Nation's Capitol.

13 **Highlighted Provisions:**

14 This resolution:

- 15 ▶ recognizes the Utah Honor Flight Program for making it possible for Utah veterans
- 16 to see and experience the war memorials in the Nation's Capitol and be honored for
- 17 their sacrifice for their nation; and
- 18 ▶ recognizes Utah's veterans for all they have done to inspire and remind the rest of us
- 19 of our precious freedoms and the sacrifices required to preserve them.

20 **Special Clauses:**

21 None

23 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

24 WHEREAS, Utahns honor all those who have worn the nation's uniform and sworn to
25 protect and defend the United States of America, across all conflicts and representing all
26 generations of Americans, ensuring and preserving our rights, liberties, and freedoms;

27 WHEREAS, the attack on Pearl Harbor plunged the United States into a war that
28 threatened its existence and tested its dedication to a culturally diverse, free society;

29 WHEREAS, according to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, an

30 estimated 640 World War II veterans die each day;

31 WHEREAS, the time to express our thanks to these brave men and women is running
32 out;

33 WHEREAS, the Honor Flight Network is a non-profit organization created solely to
34 honor America's veterans for all their sacrifices;

35 WHEREAS, the mission of the Honor Flight Network is to transport America's veterans
36 to Washington, D.C., to visit war memorials;

37 WHEREAS, the Honor Flight Network was cofounded by Earl Morse, a physician
38 assistant and retired Air Force captain, and Jeff Miller, a small business owner and son of a
39 World War II veteran;

40 WHEREAS, the first honor flight took place in May 2005 when six small planes flew
41 12 veterans to Washington, D.C.;

42 WHEREAS, due to high participation, the program began using commercial flights and
43 by the end of 2005 had transported 137 veterans to the World War II Memorial;

44 WHEREAS, what Morse and Miller began has prompted a remarkable outpouring of
45 volunteerism, fundraising, and goodwill aimed at giving due honor to the nation's veterans;

46 WHEREAS, the Honor Flight Network has transported over 180,000 veterans since
47 2005;

48 WHEREAS, in this effort, known as the Honor Flight Program, top priority is given to
49 the senior veterans -- World War II survivors, along with other veterans who may be terminally
50 ill;

51 WHEREAS, the Utah Honor Flight Program is part of the Honor Flight Network and
52 raises funds to provide Utah military veterans with a three-day trip to visit those memorials
53 dedicated to honor the service and sacrifices of themselves and their friends;

54 WHEREAS, the Utah Honor Flight Program is a 501(c)(3) corporation and is registered
55 with the state Department of Commerce with an active charitable giving permit;

56 WHEREAS, the Utah Honor Flight Program started in October 2013 under the parent
57 organization Honor Flight Network based out of Columbus, Ohio;

58 WHEREAS, the Utah Honor Flight Program prepared its first trip on a small budget
59 with a matching grant from the Honor Flight Network on October 13, 2013;

60 WHEREAS, the Utah Honor Flight Program's original goal was to allow the men and
61 women, who have served the nation in times of war, to have a first-hand opportunity to reflect
62 at their memorials and allow them to see what the nation has provided for those who made the
63 ultimate sacrifice;

64 WHEREAS, what was thought to be a one-time trip turned into a labor of love as
65 veterans who made the trip wanted to make sure other Utah veterans could share in the
66 amazing experience;

67 WHEREAS, Utah Honor Flight Program members quickly learned that what they were
68 providing by having these men and women visit at these sacred venues was healing, for the
69 individual, the family, and the communities in which these heroes served;

70 WHEREAS, since the first trip the Utah Honor Flight Program has raised nearly \$1.3
71 million to transport 1,300 World War II, Korean, and Vietnam veterans to their memorials in
72 Washington, D.C.;

73 WHEREAS, many veterans have never visited Washington, D.C., and could not make
74 this trip in their advanced years without the Honor Flight Program's support and resources;

75 WHEREAS, the Utah Honor Flight Program typically takes 50 veterans, eight staff
76 members, and also 50 guardians who cover their own costs on the trips;

77 WHEREAS, two of the staff members provide medical help when needed;

78 WHEREAS, the flights originate from Salt Lake City for many Utah veterans, and from
79 Las Vegas for Southern Utah veterans;

80 WHEREAS, the Utah Honor Flight Program utilizes commercial aircraft for the trips,
81 specifically Southwest Airlines because of the discounted ticket prices that it offers;

82 WHEREAS, the flights land at Baltimore/Washington Thurgood Marshall Airport
83 where the veterans are always greeted by a roaring sea of applause as they step off the Jetway;

84 WHEREAS, veterans, guardians, and staff members stay in nice hotels that provide
85 veterans healthy meals that meet their dietary needs;

86 WHEREAS, the entire second day of the trip is spent visiting war memorials
87 recognizing World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War;

88 WHEREAS, the group also receives a VIP tour of the National Archives;

89 WHEREAS, the day is completed with a visit to Arlington National Cemetery, where
90 the veterans observe the Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier;

91 WHEREAS, that evening a Heroes Banquet is held for the veterans at the hotel;

92 WHEREAS, the morning of the third day, prior to departing the Washington, D.C. area,
93 the group visits either the Dulles Air and Space Museum or Fort McHenry;

94 WHEREAS, upon the group's return to Salt Lake City, or St. George for the Southern
95 Utah veterans, a surprise homecoming is held where family and friends greet their heroes;

96 WHEREAS, at these homecomings, either a scout or a veterans group present each
97 veteran with a folded United States flag and a photo book of their trip;

98 WHEREAS, many of the veteran participants, heroes all, have indicated that the trip
99 has changed their lives and that of their families as the veterans have opened up about their
100 service history and shared experiences for the first time since leaving the service;

101 WHEREAS, on a recent Vietnam veteran trip, paid for by Nate Wade Subaru of Salt
102 Lake City, 38 Vietnam combat veterans shared and healed for the first time in over 40 years;

103 WHEREAS, many veterans have taken the time after these flights to do oral or written
104 histories, allowing their communities and families to keep and preserve those histories for the
105 future;

106 WHEREAS, the Utah Honor Flight Program hopes to take every veteran who can travel
107 on an Honor Flight in coming years;

108 WHEREAS, for those who are not well enough to make the trip, every effort is made to
109 provide "virtual Honor Flights";

110 WHEREAS, veterans are selected for the trip through an application process and all
111 veterans who are healthy enough to travel are eligible to participate in the program;

112 WHEREAS, applicants are called in the order applications are received by war era;

113 WHEREAS, the Utah Honor Flight Program hopes to take six trips per calendar year,

114 with a goal of transporting 300 veterans per year;

115 WHEREAS, since the fall of 2013 the Utah Honor Flight Program has made 26 trips
116 and transported just over 1,300 veterans at a cost of approximately \$1,000 per veteran;

117 WHEREAS, the Utah Honor Flight Program has one paid part-time employee and
118 several hundred volunteers who donate thousands of hours per year to make these trips a
119 reality;

120 WHEREAS, the Utah Honor Flight Program draws on many individuals, companies,
121 and organizations to succeed on behalf of veterans, including the Governor's Office, major
122 corporations, auto dealers, and Utah's congressional delegation;

123 WHEREAS, some of the program's other notable volunteers and groups that assist with
124 the trips are Patriot Guard Riders, the Utah National Guard, Eagle Scouts and other Scout
125 groups, the Pink Ladies group, many schools throughout the state, dozens of individual
126 volunteers, and several past and present members of the Utah House of Representatives; and

127 WHEREAS, donations come from individuals, organizations, government entities, and
128 large and small businesses across the state:

129 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
130 Governor concurring therein, recognizes the Utah Honor Flight Program for making it possible
131 for Utah veterans to see and experience the war memorials in the Nation's Capitol and be
132 honored for their sacrifice for their nation.

133 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor recognize Utah's
134 veterans for all they have done to inspire and remind the rest of us of our precious freedoms
135 and the sacrifices required to preserve them.

136 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to Earl Morse, Jeff
137 Miller, the Honor Flight Network, and the Utah Honor Flight Program.