

By: Senator(s) Dawkins, Cuevas, Gollott, Lee To: Rules
(47th), Harden, Williamson, Jackson (11th),
Jordan, Thomas, Simmons, Butler, Jackson
(32nd)

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 16

1 A RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE OF WORLD WAR II VETERAN
2 HORACE B. LABAT, SR., OF PASS CHRISTIAN, MISSISSIPPI, AND
3 EXPRESSING THE SYMPATHY OF THE SENATE.

4 WHEREAS, Horace B. Labat, Sr., a World War II Veteran and
5 longtime resident of Pass Christian, Mississippi, departed this
6 life on Friday, January 9, 2004; and

7 WHEREAS, Mr. Labat was a 1941 graduate of Randolph High
8 School and was a member of the Randolph High School football team;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, Mr. Labat was an active member of the Mexican Gulf
11 Lodge #64, having volunteered for service in the U.S. Army during
12 World War II, serving from 1941 to 1946 as Staff Sergeant in the
13 famed 92nd Infantry Division known as the "Buffalo Soldiers". For
14 decades, these African-American Regulars were the most effective
15 troops on the western frontier. The black regiments, which came
16 into being in 1866, quickly won the respect of their opponents.
17 In 1867, fewer than 70 of the raw recruits repulsed an estimated
18 900 warriors and Mexican bandits. During their years on the
19 frontier, they had numerous pitched battles against Lipans,
20 Kickapoos, Kiowas, Comanches and their most determined foe, the
21 Apaches, possibly the most skillful enemy in frontier history; and

22 WHEREAS, Mr. Labat saw active combat in both the European and
23 Pacific theaters of World War II battles, including Rome, Anzio,
24 the Northern Appennines and the Po Valley; his military medals and
25 citations included: the Bronze Star for heroic achievement in
26 action while fighting in Italy, the Asian Theater of Operations
27 Medal, the East African Middle East Theater of Operations Medal,

28 the Army Good Conduct Medal and the World War II Victory Medal;
29 Mr. Labat's Bronze Star Citation reads in part: "Staff Sergeant
30 Labat was in command of a squad holding one of three advance
31 isolated strong points which received a tremendous concentration
32 of hostile fire from all areas. In the heat of the situation
33 Staff Sergeant Labat calmly withheld his squad's fire until the
34 enemy was within point-blank range. Then he ordered such accurate
35 countfire that the entire enemy attack was repulsed." This
36 brilliant display of superior personal leadership inspired all
37 members of his organization and is a worthy example of a soldiers
38 gallant achievement; and

39 WHEREAS, after returning home from the war, Mr. Labat worked
40 as a master carpenter and assisted in the restoration of many of
41 the historic homes in Pass Christian and in the French Quarter of
42 New Orleans; he was a successful businessman and civic leader; and

43 WHEREAS, Mr. Labat leaves to mourn his passing: three
44 daughters, Wanda J. Labat, Sandra Dell Labat and Patricia I.
45 Labat; one son, Horace B. Labat, Jr.; four grandchildren, Adrena
46 Smiley Williams; Lemuel Smiley, Horace Smiley, Austin Labat; one
47 great-grandson, Antoine Williams; one brother-in-law, Lionel
48 Landry (Carmen); one niece, Lynette Labat Henderson; one nephew,
49 Ronald Labat; a longtime companion, Willie Mae Johnson; and a host
50 of cousins and other relatives and close friends:

51 NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
52 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commend the life of World War II
53 Veteran Horace B. Labat, Sr., of Pass Christian, Mississippi, and
54 express to his surviving family the sympathy of the Senate on his
55 passing.

56 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
57 the surviving family of Mr. Labat and be made available to the
58 *Mississippi Sun Herald* and to members of the Capitol Press Corps.