

By: Representatives Remak, Carpenter, Hall

To: Rules

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 32

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND HONORING THE
2 COURAGEOUS LIFE AND EXTRAORDINARY LEGACY OF JAMES HENRY TAYLOR FOR
3 HIS SERVICE DURING THE VIETNAM WAR.

4 WHEREAS, on March 16, 1962, Flying Tiger Line Flight 739 was
5 on a secret mission, but the flight disappeared and was never
6 found, and tragically, all those on board, including 93 United
7 States Army soldiers and 11 civilian crew members, including James
8 Henry Taylor of Olive Branch, Mississippi, perished; and

9 WHEREAS, very little is known about what happened to the
10 plane and its passengers, and due to the circumstances surrounding
11 this mission, the names of those lost have not yet been added to
12 the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C.; and

13 WHEREAS, recently, many families and loved ones of these
14 heroes gathered in Columbia Falls, Maine, where national nonprofit
15 Wreaths Across America (WAA) is based, to be present for the
16 unveiling of a new monument dedicated to the men who were lost,
17 and the new monument, which is made entirely of granite and stands
18 8 feet tall, 9.5 feet wide and 4 feet deep at its base, displays



19 the engraving of each of the 93 Army soldiers aboard, as well as
20 the names of the 11 flight crew members, many of whom were
21 veterans themselves; and

22 WHEREAS, the inscription on the stone reads: "Missing in
23 action; Presumed dead. Flying Tiger Line Flight 739 went missing
24 on March 16, 1962, with 93 U.S. Army soldiers on board. These men
25 and their flight crew perished in what would become one of the
26 biggest aviation mysteries out of the Vietnam War era. THE NAMES
27 OF THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES AND WHO REMAIN MISSING ARE INSCRIBED
28 HERE SO THAT THEY WILL BE SAID ALOUD AND THEIR MEMORY WILL LIVE
29 ON."; and

30 WHEREAS, the land where the monument was erected was donated
31 by WAA Founder Morrill Worcester, and it is located on the balsam
32 tip land where brush is harvested each year to make veterans'
33 wreaths to be placed on the headstones of our nation's heroes on
34 National Wreaths Across America Day; and

35 WHEREAS, during the ceremony, the names of each person aboard
36 Flying Tiger Line Flight 739 were honored as they were read aloud,
37 and there have been renewed efforts to add the names of the men
38 who perished on Flight 739 to the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Wall
39 as an everlasting tribute to their sacrifice and service; and

40 WHEREAS, Dianna Crumpler was among the family members who
41 attended the unveiling of the monument, as her brother, James
42 Henry Taylor, was on Flying Tiger Line Flight 739, and Dianna,



who, along with her brother, Curtis Taylor, was 17-years-old when the flight disappeared, shared James Henry Taylor's story; and

WHEREAS, James Henry Taylor was born in Memphis, Tennessee, on January 17, 1938, to James Walter and Helen Taylor of Olive Branch, Mississippi, and he attended college at then Northwest Mississippi Junior College, now known as Northwest Community College, in Senatobia, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, James was very popular in school, and his friends called him "Tater" and everyone who knew him commented about his smile, as they said that they never saw him when he wasn't smiling or laughing that crazy laugh that everyone knew was coming from him; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure at Northwest, he met Deanna Brown from Crenshaw, Mississippi, and fell in love, and the duo was united in holy matrimony after he graduated from Northwest; and

WHEREAS, after his marriage and graduation from Northwest, James attended Southwest College in Memphis, now known as Rhodes College, and was pursuing a career as a pastor in the Presbyterian Church, and was serving as the youth director at his home church, which is the same church his sister still attends in Olive Branch, Bethel Presbyterian Church, and the pastor at the time took him under his wing and loved him like his own son, mentoring him for the ministry; and

WHEREAS, after he finished two years of school, he found out that his wife, called Dee, was pregnant with their first child,



68 Merry Tamah Taylor-Mattix, so James decided the best way to take
69 care of his family was to enlist in the Army; and

70 WHEREAS, James spent two years in the Army when Dee became
71 pregnant with their second child, and a couple of months before
72 Jamie Ann was born, James re-enlisted because he could finish his
73 next three years in the Army and also study to be a minister while
74 in the service; and

75 WHEREAS, James had a month off between his two terms of
76 service so he brought his family back to Olive Branch to live
77 while he served, or at least until he was stationed at a permanent
78 base, but the mission to Vietnam, Tiger Line Flight 739 was his
79 first deployment; and

80 WHEREAS, James preached a sermon about going to Heaven the
81 Sunday before he left on that final flight, and the name of the
82 sermon was "The Odds against going to Heaven are 6 to 1," which
83 was named after a popular song in the early sixties; and

84 WHEREAS, the Tiger Line Flight 739 mission was a very secret
85 mission, so secret that all of the men were told they could bring
86 nothing with them that identified them in any way, so they had to
87 leave wedding rings, pictures, dog tags, and everything at home;
88 and

89 WHEREAS, many of the soldiers on Tiger Line Flight 739 told
90 their families that they would likely not be returning alive, but
91 James's family did not know how dangerous the mission was at that
92 time; and



93 WHEREAS, the flight left on March 16, 1962, and was lost from
94 radar between Guam and the Philippines or Saigon, but James's
95 sister knows the flight made it to Guam because he stopped long
96 enough while they were refueling to drop a postcard to his wife to
97 tell her that he loved her and missed her and where he was, but
98 this was the last contact anyone ever had with him; and

99 WHEREAS, the largest search ever made in the Pacific was
100 launched and several countries joined in the search for anything,
101 but nothing, not even a shred of anything, was found by anyone,
102 and after eight days, the search was called off and the hearts of
103 the family members of all those on board shattered; and

104 WHEREAS, sadly, after James left, Jamie Ann was born with a
105 heart defect and only lived for 12 days, and his daughter, Merry,
106 was 2-years-old when her father departed on Flight 739, and she
107 has said that it was difficult growing up without a father, and
108 that not knowing what happened to him added a layer of grief and
109 lack of closure; and

110 WHEREAS, Merry also attended the dedication of the monument
111 in Maine, and being there among the sons and daughters of other
112 parents who perished, she realized she wasn't alone, and to have
113 her father and the fathers of others honored in such a meaningful
114 way was healing for her; and

115 WHEREAS, James Henry Taylor's unflinching courage and gallant
116 self-sacrifice reflect lasting glory upon himself and uphold the
117 noble traditions of the infantry and the military service; and



118 WHEREAS, it is the policy of the Legislature to honor heroic
119 Mississippians such as James Henry Taylor for remarkable
120 dedication and self-sacrifice to the United States of America, the
121 State of Mississippi and the people of Olive Branch, who are
122 eternally appreciative, for without James, the freedom they know
123 and love would not be possible:

124 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
125 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING
126 THEREIN, That we do hereby recognize and honor the courageous life
127 and extraordinary legacy of James Henry Taylor for his service
128 during the Vietnam War.

129 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
130 furnished to the family of James Henry Taylor and to the members
131 of the Capitol Press Corps.

