

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2015
RATIFIED BILL

RESOLUTION 2015-13
SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 720

A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II.

Whereas, World War II was a global conflict involving more than 30 countries which lasted from 1939 to 1945, with major battles across Europe, the Pacific Ocean, and the Middle East; and

Whereas, in 1941, the United States of America, seeking peaceful solutions to issues vital to U.S. national security interests, was engaged in diplomatic negotiations with envoys of the Empire of Japan to resolve these issues; and

Whereas, on Sunday, December 7, 1941, while these negotiations were in progress, military forces of the Empire of Japan executed a surprise attack at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, then a Territory of the United States; and

Whereas, most of the U.S. Pacific Fleet was at anchor at Pearl Harbor on that day and was the main target of that surprise attack, within less than two hours Japanese warplanes sank or damaged eight battleships (including the USS Arizona), three light cruisers, three destroyers, and four other naval vessels, destroyed over 130 aircraft, and killed more than 2,400 Americans; and

Whereas, this act of aggression prompted President Franklin D. Roosevelt to address the U.S. Congress on December 8, 1941, to ask for a declaration of war and opened his remarks with these historic words: "Yesterday, December 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy – the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan"; and

Whereas, on December 11, 1941, in support of Japan's aggression, Nazi Germany also declared war on the U.S.; and

Whereas, because of Japan's "unprovoked and dastardly attack" on a U.S. Territory and U.S. Forces and Nazi Germany's declaration of war, the United States of America was entered into World War II; and

Whereas, more than 16 million courageous Americans of the "greatest generation" served with honor, distinction, and patriotism, fighting in every theater of operation during that war for the freedoms we enjoy today and playing a critical role in decisive battles around the world, with more than 405,000 making the supreme sacrifice; and

Whereas, over 360,000 North Carolinians served in that War, of which more than 6,300 were killed; and

Whereas, on May 7, 1945, Nazi Germany surrendered unconditionally to the U.S., marking that date V-E Day, leaving its ally, The Empire of Japan, to stand alone against the U.S. and its allies in the Pacific Theater; and

Whereas, on August 6, 1945, an American B-29 "Flying Fortress" named "Enola Gay" with North Carolina native, Colonel (Retired) Thomas W. Ferebee, a veteran of 60 bombing missions in the European Theater, serving as the lead bombardier, dropped the world's first atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima, Japan, which was followed by a second atomic bomb mission on Nagasaki, Japan, three days later; and

Whereas, on August 14, 1945, due largely to the effects of those atomic weapons, the Japanese government accepted the provisions of the Potsdam Declaration and agreed to an unconditional surrender marking that day as V-J Day, bringing an end to hostilities in the Pacific, thus ending World War II and saving an estimated one million or more U.S. casualties had the war continued and the allies been forced to invade Japan's home islands; and

Whereas, 2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the surrender of the Empire of Japan and the end of World War II; and



Whereas, with less than one million World War II veterans alive today in the United States, we must take the time to honor and remember and thank the men and women of "the greatest generation," who valiantly and with great honor defended our great Nation's freedoms against the forces of darkness and evil who would surely have denied us those freedoms; Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

SECTION 1. The General Assembly wishes to express its deepest and most heartfelt appreciation to the veterans of World War II and their families for their remarkable contributions and service to the people of North Carolina, the United States of America, and the free world. They held high the torch of freedom and we should be ever mindful that the task of preserving that fragile freedom is now ours.

SECTION 2. The General Assembly wishes to honor the life and memory of those who died while serving during World War II.

SECTION 3. This resolution is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 19th day of August, 2015.

s/ Daniel J. Forest
President of the Senate

s/ Tim Moore
Speaker of the House of Representatives