

2006 SPECIAL SESSION I

INTRODUCED

068639736

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5027

Offered May 23, 2006

Commending Captain Robert C. Eldridge.

Patrons—Hawkins, Newman and Wampler

WHEREAS, Captain Robert C. Eldridge of the 7th Special Forces Group is recognized as one of the officer candidates to receive in 2006 the United States Army's prestigious General Douglas MacArthur Leadership Award for dedication to duty, honor, and country; and

WHEREAS, a total of 27 company grade officers, six commissioned officers, and one warrant officer are selected from the National Guard and Army Reserve, and 12 commissioned officers and one warrant officer are selected from the active Army to receive the MacArthur Leadership Award each year; and

WHEREAS, Robert Eldridge enlisted in the United States Army Reserves in December 1986 and was assigned to the 11th Special Forces Group as a medic; and

WHEREAS, during his exceptional 11-year military career, Robert Eldridge earned a bachelor's degree from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, joined the active Army, graduated from Officer Candidate School, and was commissioned as an officer in 1997; and

WHEREAS, Captain Eldridge served with the 1st Brigade, 187th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), headquartered in Fort Campbell, Kentucky, as a platoon leader before he decided to rejoin Special Forces, at which time he was assigned directly to ODA 734, a Special Forces freefall parachute team; and

WHEREAS, throughout his two years as an outstanding team leader, Captain Eldridge participated in an unconventional warfare rotation assigned to the Joint Readiness Training Center in Fort Polk, Louisiana, as well as deployments to Colombia and Afghanistan; and

WHEREAS, during combat operations in Afghanistan as a detachment commander, Captain Eldridge was injured when his vehicle ran over an anti-tank mine, but because of his steadfast and inspirational leadership, his team prevailed in its important mission; and

WHEREAS, Captain Eldridge lost his left leg below the knee as a result of the injury he sustained in the mine blast, but he has made great strides in his recovery due to determination and great strength of spirit; and

WHEREAS, Captain Eldridge was honored by the Combined Joint Task Force 76 with the Bronze Star with "V" device for valor and a Purple Heart for his extraordinary bravery in the line of duty; and

WHEREAS, a celebrated American hero, Captain Eldridge is dedicated to his fellow soldiers and the United States Army and continues to serve his country as a leader, mentor, role-model, and an exemplary operations officer for the United States Army Special Forces; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly commend and congratulate Captain Robert C. Eldridge as a recipient of the General Douglas MacArthur Leadership Award for 2006; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Captain Robert C. Eldridge as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration and gratitude for his valiant and invaluable service to the Commonwealth and the nation.

INTRODUCED

SI5027