

10103097D

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 227

Offered March 2, 2010

Commending Colonel, USA Ret., Van T. Barfoot.

Patrons—Martin, Barker, Blevins, Colgan, Deeds, Edwards, Hanger, Herring, Houck, Howell, Hurt, Locke, Lucas, Marsden, Marsh, McDougle, McEachin, McWaters, Miller, J.C., Miller, Y.B., Newman, Norment, Northam, Obenshain, Petersen, Puckett, Puller, Quayle, Reynolds, Ruff, Saslaw, Smith, Stosch, Stuart, Ticer, Vogel, Wagner, Wampler, Watkins and Whipple

WHEREAS, Colonel Van T. Barfoot, United States Army retired, and Congressional Medal of Honor recipient, is commended for his service to the Commonwealth and nation; and

WHEREAS, a Choctaw Indian and native of Mississippi, Van T. Barfoot enlisted in the United States Army in 1940 and was assigned to the 1st Infantry Division; he was promoted to technical sergeant in 1941 and reassigned to the 157th Infantry Division in 1943; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Barfoot took part in the landings at Sicily and Salerno in 1943; in early 1944, the 157th Infantry Division landed at Anzio and began moving inland before German reinforcements stopped the Allied advance; and

WHEREAS, on May 23, 1944, Sergeant Barfoot's company attacked with Sergeant Barfoot leading a squad; and

WHEREAS, in an extraordinary display of courage and skill, Sergeant Barfoot destroyed two German machine gun nests, killed four German soldiers, and took 17 prisoners; and

WHEREAS, later the same day, the enemy launched a counterattack; Sergeant Barfoot disabled a German tank using a Bazooka rocket launcher, killing three of the occupants as they escaped, and destroyed a German fieldpiece by using explosives; he then assisted two of his seriously wounded men 1,700 yards to safety; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his heroic actions above and beyond the call of duty, Sergeant Barfoot was promoted to lieutenant and received the prestigious Congressional Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military decoration, on September 28, 1944; and

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Barfoot continued to serve his country with a long and exemplary career in the military, including duty in Korea and Vietnam before retiring in 1974; and

WHEREAS, after his retirement from the military, Colonel Barfoot generously gave of his time and talents to the Commonwealth as a member of the Board of Veterans Affairs, where he worked diligently on behalf of his fellow veterans; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Barfoot has received numerous awards and honors for his service, including a monument dedicated to him and a road named after him in his native Mississippi and the naming of the second Virginia Veterans Care Center at McGuire Veterans Administration Hospital after him and fellow Richmond-area Medal of Honor recipient, Colonel Carl Sitter; and

WHEREAS, throughout a long life dedicated to his country, Colonel Barfoot has demonstrated great courage and loyalty under fire that serves as a reminder of the perils faced daily by the thousands of Americans who serve in our armed forces overseas and whose devotion to duty places them in harm's way; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly commend Colonel, USA Ret., Van T. Barfoot, a courageous and patriotic Virginian, for his service to the Commonwealth and nation; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Colonel, USA Ret., Van T. Barfoot as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration and respect.

INTRODUCED

SJ227