

13100385D

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 94

Offered January 9, 2013

Prefiled December 20, 2012

Celebrating the life of Lieutenant Colonel Bill Rhea Starnes.

Patrons—O'Quinn and Kilgore

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Colonel Bill Rhea Starnes, the pilot for K-VA-T Food Stores, Inc., and Central Coal Company and a distinguished veteran known for his skillful flying and commitment to his country, died on August 24, 2012; and

WHEREAS, at the young age of 14, Bill Starnes learned to fly under the tutelage of his father, Rhea; the skill and love of flying that he learned from his father led to a nearly 40-year career in the military that took him to locations around the world; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of East Tennessee State University, Bill Starnes joined the United States Army and graduated from flight school at Fort Rucker, Alabama, in 1971 and qualified on the UH-1A/B/D/H, TH-55, and AH-1G Cobra helicopters before being assigned to the C Troop, 7th Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry in Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, Bill Starnes bravely flew approximately 800 combat hours while stationed in Vietnam before being transferred to Battery B, 4th Battalion, 77th Aerial Field Artillery, 101st Airborne Division, at Fort Campbell, Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, in 1974 Bill Starnes joined the Tennessee Army National Guard and continued to valiantly serve his country, including as a member of the Joint Task Force Paladin in Kosovo, as he gained expertise and experience on additional aircraft, eventually commanding multiple line units and attaining the rank of lieutenant colonel before his retirement in 2009; and

WHEREAS, a highly decorated pilot, Bill Starnes earned the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, two Air Medals with Valor, Army Commendation Medal, nine Army Achievement Medals, five Army Reserve Components Achievement Medals, three National Defense Service Medals, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Kosovo Campaign Medal with Bronze Star, and Armed Forces Reserve Medal with "M" device; and

WHEREAS, Bill Starnes also earned three Armed Forces Reserve Medals, Army Service Ribbon, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm, NATO Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with 60 Device, Vietnam Service Medal with four campaign stars, two Overseas Service Ribbons, Master Army Aviator Badge, seven Tennessee National Guard Service Ribbons, Tennessee National Guard Distinguished Unit Commendation Ribbon, and Tennessee National Guard Volunteer Ribbon; and

WHEREAS, a valued and loyal pilot for K-VA-T Food Stores, Inc., and Central Coal Company, Bill Starnes had also previously flown for Pittston Coal Company, providing safe transportation for company executives and others; and

WHEREAS, a true patriot, Bill Starnes possessed a generous spirit, firm commitment to his country, and immense love of flying, and will be greatly missed by his many loving family members, friends, and coworkers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Delegates hereby note with great sadness the loss of a distinguished veteran, Lieutenant Colonel Bill Rhea Starnes; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Lieutenant Colonel Bill Rhea Starnes as an expression of the House of Delegates' respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

HR94