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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 320

Offered January 18, 2019

Commemorating the 75th anniversary of D-Day.

Patrons—Newman, Edwards and Suetterlein; Delegates: Austin, Byron, Cole and Garrett

WHEREAS, June 6, 2019, marks the 75th anniversary of the Allied assault at Normandy, France, by American, British, and Canadian troops, which was known as Operation Overlord; and

WHEREAS, before Operation Overlord, the German Army still occupied France and the Nazi government still had access to the raw materials and industrial capacity of Western Europe; and

WHEREAS, the naval phase of the assault on Normandy was code-named Neptune, and June 6, 1944, the date of the landing, is referred to as D-Day; and

WHEREAS, the D-Day landing was the largest single amphibious assault in history, consisting of approximately 31,000 members of the United States Armed Forces, 153,000 members of the Allied Expeditionary Force, 5,000 naval vessels, and more than 11,000 sorties by Allied aircraft; and

WHEREAS, soldiers of six divisions (three American, two British, and one Canadian) stormed ashore in five main landing areas on beaches in Normandy, code-named Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword; and

WHEREAS, of the approximately 10,000 Allied casualties incurred on the first day of the landing, more than 6,000 casualties were members of the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, the age of the remaining World War II veterans and the gradual disappearance of any living memory of World War II and the Normandy landings make it necessary to increase activities intended to pass on the history of these events, particularly to younger generations; and

WHEREAS, the young people of Normandy and the United States have displayed unprecedented commitment to and involvement in celebrating the veterans of the Normandy landings and the freedom that they brought with them in 1944; and

WHEREAS, the significant material remains of the Normandy landing, such as shipwrecks and various items of military equipment found both on the Normandy beaches and at the bottom of the sea in French territorial waters, bear witness to the remarkable amount of resources needed to successfully execute the Normandy landings; and

WHEREAS, the five Normandy landing sites and a number of sites on the Normandy coast, including Pointe du Hoc, constitute a unique piece of American and European heritage and a symbol of peace and freedom, the unspoiled nature, integrity, and authenticity of which must be protected at all costs; and

WHEREAS, the French government has worked diligently to preserve the remains of the Normandy landing, by including them on the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage List; and

WHEREAS, dedicated on June 6, 2001, the National D-Day Memorial honors the memory of the American and Allied troops who participated in Operation Overlord, many of whom made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of freedom; the memorial is located in Bedford, which suffered the highest per capita losses of any community in the United States on D-Day; and

WHEREAS, Virginians are encouraged to observe the 75th anniversary of D-Day with appropriate ceremonies and programs to honor the members of the Greatest Generation who sought to liberate Europe from Nazism and fascism and the service and sacrifices of all veterans; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the 75th anniversary of D-Day be commemorated on June 6, 2019; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to the National D-Day Memorial Foundation, requesting that the organization further disseminate copies of this resolution to their respective constituents so that they may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter.

INTRODUCED

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