

2022 SESSION

ENROLLED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 80

Celebrating the life of Colonel Edward David Shames, USA, Ret.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 3, 2022
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 7, 2022

WHEREAS, Colonel Edward David Shames, USA, Ret., of Virginia Beach, the last surviving officer of E Company, 2nd Battalion, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, the World War II paratrooper unit known as the "Band of Brothers," died on December 3, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the youngest child of Jewish immigrants from Russia who settled in the Commonwealth, Edward "Ed" Shames grew up in Norfolk; and

WHEREAS, in 1942, Ed Shames joined many of the other young men of his generation in service to the nation during World War II when he enlisted in the United States Army and volunteered for paratrooper training; and

WHEREAS, Ed Shames was assigned to I Company, 3rd Battalion, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, and made his first combat jump in June 1944 as part of Operation Overlord, dropping behind enemy lines to support the amphibious landings at Normandy on D-Day; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his leadership abilities, Ed Shames received a battlefield commission to second lieutenant and transferred to E "Easy" Company as leader of the company's third platoon; and

WHEREAS, Ed Shames completed another combat jump into the Netherlands with Easy Company as part of Operation Market Garden in September 1944 and participated in Operation Pegasus, a mission to rescue Allied soldiers and civilians hiding in German-occupied territory after the Battle of Arnhem; and

WHEREAS, in December 1944, Ed Shames and Easy Company fought in the Battle of the Bulge, holding a critical position near the town of Bastogne against overwhelming odds until Allied forces stalled the offensive and shattered the Nazi front line; and

WHEREAS, after American forces crossed into Germany, Ed Shames was one of the first members of his unit to enter a sub-camp of the Dachau concentration camp complex, uncovering hundreds of dead and liberating many fellow Jews and other political prisoners; and

WHEREAS, Ed Shames subsequently entered the Eagle's Nest, a mountaintop retreat near Berchtesgaden, where he liberated several bottles of cognac marked for Adolf Hitler's private use that he later shared with family and friends at his first son's Bar Mitzvah; and

WHEREAS, the wartime achievements of Easy Company and Ed Shames were immortalized in the book *Band of Brothers* by Stephen E. Ambrose, which was adapted into an acclaimed HBO miniseries created by Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg; and

WHEREAS, Ed Shames returned to the Commonwealth and pursued a career with the National Security Agency, becoming an expert on Middle East affairs; he continued to serve in uniform as a member of the United States Army Reserve and retired with the rank of colonel in 1973; and

WHEREAS, predeceased by his wife of 73 years, Ida, Ed Shames will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by his sons, Steven and Douglas, and their families; and numerous other family members, friends, and fellow veterans; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of Colonel Edward David Shames, USA, Ret., a member of the Greatest Generation who served the nation during World War II; and a highly admired member of the Virginia Beach community; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Colonel Edward David Shames, USA, Ret., as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

ENROLLED

SJ80ER