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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 408

Offered February 18, 2008

Celebrating the life of Junior James Spurrier.

Patron—Phillips

WHEREAS, Junior James Spurrier, born James Ira Spurrier, Jr., in Wise County in 1922, was one of the war heroes of the so-called "Greatest Generation," an exceptional soldier who single-handedly engineered feats of extraordinary bravery during his military service; and

WHEREAS, Junior Spurrier lived in Bluefield, West Virginia, and worked at a Civilian Conservation Corps camp there until he joined the United States Army in September of 1940, and he was deployed to both the Pacific Theater and Europe; and

WHEREAS, a private when he enlisted, Junior Spurrier quickly rose to the rank of staff sergeant, and in the fall of 1944, he was a platoon commander for Company G, 134th Infantry, 35th Infantry Division, 9th Army stationed near Lay St. Christophe, France; and

WHEREAS, charged with taking a heavily guarded hill near Lay St. Christophe, Sergeant Spurrier mounted a tank destroyer, took its .50 caliber machine gun, and cleared the way for his platoon to advance, capturing over 20 German soldiers along the way; he received the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions that day; and

WHEREAS, on November 14, 1944, Sergeant Spurrier led his platoon in an attack to take over the German-held town of Achain, France; he had his platoon approach the town from one side while he entered by himself from another direction; and

WHEREAS, the Germans successfully defended the town from the advancing platoon, but Sergeant Spurrier used his Browning Automatic Rifle, his M-1 rifle, American and German rocket launchers, a German pistol, and hand grenades to kill 25 German soldiers and capture several more; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Spurrier was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his unprecedented feats that day, and he received many other honors and distinctions for his valiant service, including a Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster, Croix de Guerre, American Theater Service Medal, American Defense Service Medal with Bronze Star, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, Marksman Badge (M-1 rifle), and Combat Infantry Badge; and

WHEREAS, Junior Spurrier died in 1984 in Tennessee, but the man dubbed a "one man army" by fellow veterans was honored in 2006 with a memorial in Bluefield, West Virginia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby celebrate the life of Junior James Spurrier, a true patriot and a man of unbounded courage; 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 Junior James Spurrier as an expression of the General Assembly's respect and admiration for his heroism and his dedication to duty.

INTRODUCED

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