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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 324

Offered February 17, 2014

Celebrating the life of Lieutenant Sean Christopher Snyder.

Patrons—Villanueva, Davis, DeSteph, Knight, Stolle and Taylor; Senators: Cosgrove, McWaters and Wagner

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Sean Christopher Snyder of Virginia Beach, a man of true honor and a hero who considered it a distinct privilege to serve his country as an officer and as a helicopter pilot in the United States Navy, died on January 8, 2014, during a training mission off the coast of the Commonwealth of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, while serving with Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15, Lieutenant Snyder served with unwavering dedication and courage, making multiple deployments to the island nation of Bahrain in the Arabian Gulf; and

WHEREAS, while providing support to United States Naval Forces Central Command Fifth Fleet operations during Operation Enduring Freedom, Lieutenant Snyder served as mission commander, leading a Sikorsky MH-53E Sea Dragon helicopter crew in the execution of airborne mine countermeasures operations to successfully deter seaborne mining efforts in the Arabian Gulf; and

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Snyder's actions directly supported the success of the United States and multinational forces in ensuring that sea lines of communication, which are vital for seaborne international trade, remained open; and

WHEREAS, as part of an elite cadre, Lieutenant Snyder flew the MH-53E from Bahrain to Ghazi Air Base, Pakistan, in support of humanitarian relief and lifesaving operations after the devastating floods in July and August of 2010, executing a tactically demanding flight through tenuous international airspace with stops in Oman and on the USS *PELELIU* in the Indian Ocean; and

WHEREAS, in continuous flight operations to and from the remote region of Colamb in the Swat Valley, Lieutenant Snyder demonstrated exceptional airmanship and dedication to mission, resulting in the rescue of over 2,500 Pakistani citizens and the movement of nearly one million pounds of relief supplies; and

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Snyder's professionalism and leadership merited numerous awards and commendations throughout his 21 years of honorable service in the United States Navy; rising from enlisted to officer ranks, amassing 1,576 total flight hours, and gaining widespread recognition within the naval aviator community as one of the most highly skilled and respected instructors, Lieutenant Snyder was a trusted mentor whose open-door style of leadership had a deep and lasting impact on all Sailors and Marines with whom he served; and

WHEREAS, in word and deed, Lieutenant Snyder was known and admired as a true servant of others who was motivated by his sincere and passionate faith in Jesus Christ, which he shared through countless hours of devoted service as an elder and a youth leader at Glad Tidings Church in Norfolk, where the impact of his life will continue in the lives of those he touched; and

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Snyder will be forever remembered and deeply missed by his beloved wife, Amy, with whom he shared great love and joy throughout their marriage; sons, Sean II, Brady, and Ethan; daughter, Makayla; and numerous other family members, friends, and fellow members of the United States Navy; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of a devoted husband and father and an honorable servant in both his sacred faith and his esteemed service to the United States of America, Lieutenant Sean Christopher Snyder; 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 Sean Christopher Snyder as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

INTRODUCED

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