

2021 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 321

Commending Elizabeth Lewis.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 8, 2021

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Lewis, a veteran of World War II and a respected member of her community, celebrated her 100th birthday on December 13, 2020; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Lewis was born in Fairmont, West Virginia, in 1920 and was a firsthand witness to many significant events in the 20th century, including the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, which inspired her and her brothers to serve the nation; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Lewis enlisted in the United States Army while her two brothers enlisted in the United States Navy and United States Army Air Corps; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Lewis was studying to become a nurse prior to the United States' formal declaration of war; 22 years of age at the time of her enlistment, she completed extensive training and rose to the rank of first lieutenant; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Lewis joined the United States Army Nurse Corps as a surgical nurse in 1943 and was assigned to the unarmed hospital ship USAHS *Emily H. M. Weder*, named after the first Army nurse killed in action during World War II; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Lewis's hospital ship had a capacity of 1,000 patients with a staff of 120 nurses and doctors, a chaplain, and 300 enlisted service members; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Lewis departed from New York to Sicily, treating wounded who arrived on barges until the ship reached capacity and returned to the United States; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Lewis was stationed in North Africa and Italy and was later sent to the Pacific theater, where she endured harsh conditions and treated service members wounded in New Guinea and the Philippines until the end of the war; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Lewis saved the lives of countless American service members, caring for hundreds of soldiers over the course of her multiple deployments during the war; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Lewis served the country faithfully and received an honorable discharge in 1946; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Lewis continued her nursing career long after the war, and the experience she gained under pressure during her deployments prepared her well for the challenges she faced as a civilian health care professional; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Lewis has continued to be a voice for veterans and their families while honoring and sharing the stories of her fellow members of "the Greatest Generation"; she participates in honor flights, which transport military veterans to Washington, D.C., to visit war memorials at no charge; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Lewis reflected on her own service and the sacrifices of her fellow service members at the 100th Anniversary Veterans Day ceremony in 2019 at the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Lewis spoke on behalf of the National Museum of Americans in Wartime's Voices of Freedom Project, which is planned to be built in Dale City; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Lewis's courage, patriotism, humility, and grace are an inspiration to current and future generations of Americans; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Elizabeth Lewis hereby be commended for her exceptional and selfless record of military service to the nation as a surgical nurse in World War II as well as her continued involvement in her local community; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Elizabeth Lewis as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for her service to the Commonwealth and the nation.

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