



March 19, 2007

Legislative Digest

H.Con.Res. 42 – Honoring the heroic service and sacrifice of the 6,500 glider pilots of the United States Army Air Forces during World War II

Floor Situation

H.Con.Res. 42 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY) on January 23, 2007, and was referred to the House Committee on Armed Services, but was not considered.

H.Con.Res. 42 is expected to be considered on March 20, 2007.

**Note: In the 109th Congress, Rep. McCarthy introduced an identical bill, H.Con.Res.283, in the House of Representatives on November 11, 2005. The bill was not considered by the House of Representatives.*

Summary

H.Con.Res. 42 honors the heroic service and sacrifice of the 6,500 glider pilots of the United States Army Air Forces during World War II and urges the American people to remember and teach future generations about the contributions and sacrifices that glider pilots, and all veterans, have made to and for the Nation.

Background

The United States Army Air Forces began training glider pilots in 1942, eventually training approximately 6,500 men. Glider pilots completed 8 successful missions during the course of World War II:

- Operation Husky, which took place in Sicily on July 9, 1943: glider pilots carried British airborne troops, completing their mission despite heavy casualties resulting from landings at sea;
- Operation Broadway, which took place in Burma on March 5, 1944: glider pilots took the Japanese completely by surprise; carried troops, airborne engineers, and equipment by night; seized and prepared landing strips for forthcoming transport planes; and evacuated the wounded, accomplishing in 2 hours what would have taken 2 months by ambulance;

- Operation Overlord, on June 6, 1944: glider pilots took part in the Battle of Normandy, the largest combined airborne and seaborne invasion in history, carrying troopers of the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions and their equipment to landing areas behind enemy lines;
- Operation Dragoon, which took place in the coastal area of southern France on August 15, 1944: glider pilots delivered troops and cargo despite wooden poles erected in open fields to impede their landing;
- Operation Market-Garden, the largest glider operation of World War II, which took place in Holland on September 17, 1944: glider pilots carried their usual cargo of troops and heavy equipment, thereby providing cover for an attempt to clear a road to Berlin;
- Operation Repulse, which took place in Bastogne on December 27, 1944: as part of the Battle of the Bulge, glider pilots, although flying directly through enemy fire, were able to land every glider, delivering the badly needed ammunition, gasoline, and medical supplies that enabled defenders against the German offensive to persevere and secure the ultimate victory;
- Operation Varsity, which took place at the Rhine crossing in Wesel, Germany, on March 24, 1945: more than 1,300 glider pilots took part in their final European mission, delivering a fatal blow to Axis forces; and,
- Operation Gypsy Task Force-Appari Mission, which took place in the Philippine island of Luzon on June 23, 1945: glider pilots took part in their final, and only Pacific, mission, carrying members of the 11th Airborne Division

Cost

CBO has not scored H. Con. Res. 42.

Staff Contact

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