

By: Craddick

H.C.R. No. 52

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, The Commemorative Air Force, whose mission is to
2 preserve the military aviation history of the United States, owns
3 the oldest and only flight-worthy B-24A Liberator in existence; and

4 WHEREAS, A heavy bomber, the B-24A was the first production
5 model of a plane built by the Consolidated Aircraft Corporation and
6 used by every branch of the U.S. armed forces during World War II,
7 as well as by a number of Allied forces; because of its long range,
8 the plane was suited not only for bombing missions, but also for
9 reconnaissance, cargo and personnel transport, and marine and
10 antisubmarine patrol; by the end of the war, nearly 18,500 B-24s had
11 been manufactured, more than any other American combat aircraft of
12 the period; and

13 WHEREAS, The B-24 had its genesis in 1938, when the army
14 approached Consolidated Aircraft about the possibility of its
15 becoming a second supplier of the B-17; Consolidated responded,
16 however, with a proposal for a different design, and the army
17 subsequently asked the company to develop a plane that would exceed
18 the B-17 in speed, ceiling capacity, and range; later designated
19 the B-24, the aircraft that Consolidated outlined in response to
20 the request was the first American heavy bomber to use retractable
21 landing gear; the new plane also incorporated such distinctive
22 features as two rudders and vertical fins, hydraulically operated
23 wing flaps, bomb bay doors, and power brakes; and

24 WHEREAS, The army subsequently requested several prototypes

1 from Consolidated, and in 1939 it placed an order for 38 B-24As,
2 before any version of the plane had actually flown; in the end, only
3 nine planes were built to A model specifications; another nine were
4 converted on the assembly line to the C model design, and the
5 remaining 20 were converted for use by the British Royal Air Force,
6 which was the first to dub the plane the "Liberator"; and

7 WHEREAS, The United States Army Air Forces received their
8 first B-24As in 1941 and, like the British, used them initially as
9 transport planes; one of the U.S. craft carried presidential
10 advisor Averell Harriman and Britain's Lord Beaverbrook to Moscow
11 in the fall of 1941, to assess the Soviet need for aid after the Nazi
12 invasion of that country; a later model of the B-24 was modified for
13 use by Winston Churchill as his personal aircraft; and

14 WHEREAS, American B-24s first saw combat in June 1942, and
15 over the next three years they served in every theater of the war;
16 in the Pacific, they eventually replaced the B-17, owing to their
17 longer range, and in Europe, they performed yeoman service as
18 strategic bombers for the U.S. 8th, 9th, and 15th Air Forces; they
19 were also instrumental in subduing the German U-boat threat in the
20 Atlantic; following the war, the B-24 was employed extensively in
21 the Pacific as a transport plane to aid in the rebuilding of Japan,
22 China, and the Philippines; and

23 WHEREAS, The rare B-24A owned by the Commemorative Air Force
24 is based at the Cavanaugh Flight Museum in Addison; known as "Ol'
25 927," the plane is flown in air shows during the spring, summer, and
26 fall, and it will soon be embarking on its Land of Liberty Tour,
27 during which it will make appearances throughout Texas; the tour is

1 intended to encourage a renewed appreciation for patriotism and
2 freedom among children and adults alike, and informative
3 programming will be provided by the American Airpower Heritage
4 Museum, the educational complement to the CAF; and

5 WHEREAS, The B-24 played a critical role in the Allied
6 victory in World War II, and it is fitting that its importance to
7 the Allied effort in that global conflict be appropriately
8 recognized; now, therefore, be it

9 RESOLVED, That the 81st Legislature of the State of Texas
10 hereby designate "Ol' 927," the B-24A Liberator owned and
11 maintained by the Commemorative Air Force, as the official World
12 War II Aircraft of Texas.