

By: Bohac

H.R. No. 732

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Leon Abrusley served his country bravely during  
2 World War II as a seaman first class in the United States Navy; and

3           WHEREAS, Mr. Abrusley was born into a family of Syrian  
4 immigrants in Oakdale, Louisiana, on August 12, 1924; on December  
5 23, 1941, 16 days after the attack on Pearl Harbor, he answered his  
6 nation's call to duty and enlisted in the navy, at the age of 17; and

7           WHEREAS, Seaman Abrusley was assigned to a destroyer in the  
8 Pacific theater, the USS *Henley*; during an engagement off the coast  
9 of New Guinea on October 3, 1943, the *Henley* was sunk by Japanese  
10 torpedoes; Seaman Abrusley was one of only 243 survivors who made it  
11 into the life rafts; and

12           WHEREAS, Adrift in the sea in the pouring rain, Seaman  
13 Abrusley thought of the oil derricks he'd seen while passing  
14 through Kilgore, Texas, and promised himself he'd survive to return  
15 there and work in the oil fields; eventually he was rescued by  
16 another U.S. destroyer, the USS *Reid*; and

17           WHEREAS, After recovering from his ordeal, Seaman Abrusley  
18 joined the crew of the USS *Pritchett* on January 15, 1944, and  
19 remained with that ship until the end of the war; during his service  
20 with the *Pritchett*, he saw duty in the waters off Saipan, Guam, the  
21 Philippines, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa; the *Pritchett* sustained several  
22 kamikaze hits by Japanese planes over the course of that period,  
23 and in July 1945, it rescued crew members of the USS *Callaghan*,  
24 after that ship was sunk; and

1           WHEREAS, Following his discharge from the service, Mr.  
2 Abrusley earned a degree in petroleum engineering from Louisiana  
3 State University, which led to a successful 30-year career with  
4 Skelly Oil in Carthage, Texas, not far from Kilgore; he later  
5 retired with his family to Houston; and

6           WHEREAS, Leon Abrusley is a distinguished member of that  
7 proud generation of brave Americans who stepped forward to defend  
8 their country during one of its darkest hours, and his courage and  
9 perseverance in the face of great danger have earned him the lasting  
10 gratitude of his fellow citizens; now, therefore, be it

11           RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas  
12 Legislature hereby commend Leon Abrusley for his service to the  
13 nation during World War II and extend to him sincere best wishes for  
14 continued success and happiness; and, be it further

15           RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
16 prepared for Mr. Abrusley as an expression of high regard by the  
17 Texas House of Representatives.