

By: Van de Putte

S.C.R. No. 5

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, The Texas Legislative Medal of Honor was established
2 to recognize gallant and intrepid service by a member of the state
3 or federal military forces, and Audie Murphy, the most highly
4 decorated American soldier of World War II, would be a fitting
5 recipient of this prestigious award; and

6 WHEREAS, Born in Kingston, Hunt County, on June 20, 1925,
7 Audie Leon Murphy was one of 12 children; he received several years
8 of formal education before leaving school to help support his
9 family; in addition to working a variety of jobs, he hunted small
10 game for food and became a crack shot; and

11 WHEREAS, Audie Murphy tried to enlist in the armed forces
12 after the attack on Pearl Harbor but was rejected because he was
13 underage; later, when he claimed to be a year older than he actually
14 was, the marines and paratroopers turned him down on the grounds
15 that he was too short and thin; finally, in June 1942, still
16 misrepresenting his date of birth, he managed to join the army
17 infantry; determined to become a combat soldier, he successfully
18 resisted the effort of his company commander to have him
19 transferred to a cook and bakers school; and

20 WHEREAS, In early 1943, Private Murphy shipped overseas to
21 Morocco as a replacement in Company B, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry
22 Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division; while stationed in North Africa,
23 he participated in extensive training maneuvers; he saw his first
24 combat in July 1943, when the 3rd Division invaded Sicily, and he

1 subsequently took part in the landing at Salerno, the Volturno
2 River Campaign, the landing at Anzio, and the march on Rome; during
3 those months in Italy, Audie Murphy demonstrated both exceptional
4 skill as a marksman and a sound grasp of small-unit tactics; his
5 proficiency as a soldier earned him repeated promotions and several
6 decorations for valor; and

7 WHEREAS, On the morning of August 15, 1944, Staff Sergeant
8 Murphy landed with the 3rd Division in southern France; that same
9 day, he earned the Distinguished Service Cross, this nation's
10 second-highest award for heroism, for his actions in
11 single-handedly destroying a German machine gun crew and several
12 other enemy positions, feats that made possible the capture of a
13 fiercely contested hill; the following October 2 and October 5, he
14 earned Silver Stars for further heroic action; and

15 WHEREAS, That fall, Audie Murphy received a battlefield
16 commission as a second lieutenant; soon afterward, he sustained a
17 wound that removed him from action for the next 10 weeks; though not
18 completely healed, he returned to his unit early the next year, and
19 on January 25, 1945, he became company commander; and

20 WHEREAS, At that time, Lieutenant Murphy's men were engaged
21 in the effort to clear German soldiers from an area in eastern
22 France known as the Colmar Pocket; on January 26, in bitter cold and
23 with several feet of snow covering the ground, Company B came under
24 attack by six German tanks and 250 German infantrymen; Lieutenant
25 Murphy ordered his troops, whose effective strength had been
26 reduced by about 40 percent, to fall back; he remained forward and
27 continued to direct Allied artillery fire by telephone; when the

1 German tanks drew abreast of his position, he mounted a burning tank
2 destroyer and, though exposed to fire on three sides, employed its
3 machine gun against the enemy, causing the German infantry to waver
4 and the tanks to fall back; he continued to hold his ground in the
5 firefight for an hour, wiping out a German squad that had reached
6 within 10 yards of his position; when his ammunition was exhausted,
7 he made his way back to his company, refused medical treatment for a
8 leg wound, and led his men in a successful counterattack, enabling
9 his unit to save the woods that had been the Germans' objective;
10 Lieutenant Murphy was credited with personally killing or wounding
11 about 50 enemy combatants in that encounter, and his exceptional
12 bravery earned him the Medal of Honor; and

13 WHEREAS, The following month, Audie Murphy was withdrawn from
14 the front lines, promoted to first lieutenant, and made a liaison
15 officer; he returned to the States in mid-June 1945, having earned
16 28 medals, including several from France and Belgium; he was not yet
17 21; and

18 WHEREAS, Lieutenant Murphy received his discharge from the
19 army in September 1945; he joined the Texas National Guard in 1950,
20 after the outbreak of the Korean War, and eventually attained the
21 rank of major; assigned to inactive status in 1957, he transferred
22 to the United States Army Reserve in 1966 and continued as a member
23 of the reserve until his death in 1971; and

24 WHEREAS, Though his extraordinary record in the war brought
25 him widespread fame, Audie Murphy remained profoundly humble,
26 highlighting his comrades' courage, rather than his own, in his
27 autobiography and requesting a plain government headstone for his

1 grave, instead of one adorned with the gold gilt that typically
2 signifies a Medal of Honor recipient; and

3 WHEREAS, Audie Murphy repeatedly risked his life to save the
4 lives of his fellow soldiers and to help advance their mission, and
5 for his remarkable heroism he is most assuredly deserving of this
6 state's supreme military award; now, therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED, That the 83rd Legislature of the State of Texas,
8 1st Called Session, hereby direct the governor of the State of Texas
9 to award the Texas Legislative Medal of Honor posthumously to Audie
10 Leon Murphy in recognition of his valiant actions in World War II.