

By: Sheffield

H.R. No. 2354

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The 75th anniversary of the commissioning of Camp
2 Bowie, the World War II training facility in Brownwood, is being
3 celebrated with a symposium and other events on the campus of Howard
4 Payne University from September 16 to 18, 2015; and

5 WHEREAS, The original Camp Bowie, a World War I training
6 camp, was situated near Fort Worth, but on September 19, 1940, the
7 U.S. War Department authorized the construction of a new training
8 ground near Brownwood, and on September 27, 1940, work began on the
9 site, the first major defense project in Texas during the World War
10 II era; at one time, more than 15,000 laborers were working on the
11 project; and

12 WHEREAS, In late 1940, the 36th Infantry Division of the
13 Texas Army National Guard, also known as the Texas Division, was
14 mobilized, and during 1941 and 1942, its members trained at the new
15 camp in Brownwood before transferring to Florida and Massachusetts,
16 where they shipped out to join the war in Europe; they took part in
17 the landing at Salerno, Italy, in 1943, joining the first Allied
18 troops to invade Hitler's Europe, and over the course of the war,
19 the division suffered nearly 20,000 casualties, including 3,717 men
20 killed in action, 12,685 wounded, and 3,064 missing in action; and

21 WHEREAS, By October 1942, Camp Bowie in Brownwood had grown
22 to 123,000 acres in Brown and Mills Counties, with a 5,000-acre
23 campsite and another 118,000 acres used for training exercises;
24 eight divisions trained at the camp, and many other battalions,

1 regiments, and companies passed through to use the training
2 grounds; there were never fewer than 30,000 men in the camp at any
3 one time, and at one point, its population was 60,000; more than a
4 quarter of a million soldiers passed through Camp Bowie between
5 1941 and the end of the war; and

6 WHEREAS, In August 1943, the camp began to house German
7 prisoners of war, many of them veterans of Field Marshal Erwin
8 Rommel's famed Afrika Corps; these men performed tasks at the camp
9 and also worked as day laborers for local ranchers and farmers; and

10 WHEREAS, Camp Bowie was decommissioned in August 1946, and in
11 the years since, much of the land has been developed as Camp Bowie
12 Industrial Park; the camp's chapels were moved to Eastland and
13 Stephenville, and many of its other buildings were transferred to
14 Brownwood; a small portion of the original camp is still used to
15 train members of the Texas State Guard and other Texas military
16 forces each year; and

17 WHEREAS, Sponsored by Tarleton State University, Howard
18 Payne University, and the Brown County Museum of History, the
19 anniversary symposium will feature presentations by academics,
20 military scholars, and researchers, as well as the debut of a new
21 exhibit that explores the history of the camp, the men who trained
22 there, and the region's contributions to the war effort; and

23 WHEREAS, During a time of worldwide conflict, Camp Bowie in
24 Brownwood became an important training center for thousands of
25 American military personnel, playing a vital role in the defense of
26 our nation's security and the preservation of freedom; now,
27 therefore, be it

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1 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 84th Texas
2 Legislature hereby commemorate the 75th anniversary of the
3 establishment of Camp Bowie in Brownwood.