

By: Faircloth

H.R. No. 2994

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, United States Army Sergeant First Class Gary Lamar  
2 Collins of Hardin was killed in action while courageously serving  
3 his country in Iraq, and his heroism and sacrifice are being honored  
4 at the Concert for Hope in Winnie on June 13, 2015; and

5           WHEREAS, Hosted by the Different Rhythm Foundation, which  
6 combats terrorism and the extinction of keystone species in Africa,  
7 this event is the only full-day military tribute in the state;  
8 proceeds will benefit the Crystal Beach Retreat Facility of the  
9 nonprofit Lone Survivor Foundation, an organization dedicated to  
10 caring for wounded servicemembers and their families and to helping  
11 veterans transition back into civilian life; and

12           WHEREAS, Assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry  
13 Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division out of Fort Riley,  
14 Kansas, Sergeant Collins was a longtime member of the army and was  
15 certified as both an airborne specialist and a ranger; after  
16 serving in Bosnia, he was deployed to Iraq, where he was killed by  
17 an improvised explosive device in Fallujah on November 8, 2003,  
18 becoming the 13th fallen member of the U.S. armed forces from Fort  
19 Riley during Operation Iraqi Freedom; and

20           WHEREAS, During his decorated military career, Sergeant  
21 Collins earned seven Army Achievement Medals, three Army  
22 Commendation Medals, and the prestigious Expert Infantryman Badge,  
23 and he was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple  
24 Heart and promoted to sergeant first class; and

1           WHEREAS, Gary Collins was born on May 18, 1971, and graduated  
2 in 1990 from Magnolia High School, where he distinguished himself  
3 as captain of the football team and as a member of the baseball and  
4 track and field teams and was voted class favorite for four  
5 consecutive years; he married his high school sweetheart, the  
6 former Kassandra Kennedy, on February 2, 1992, and the couple  
7 became the loving parents of two children, Taylor and Landry; and

8           WHEREAS, Americans owe a profound debt of gratitude to those  
9 who have answered this nation's call to duty, and the special  
10 recognition given to Sergeant Collins by the Different Rhythm  
11 Foundation will serve to further perpetuate the memory of this  
12 brave soldier for many years to come; now, therefore, be it

13           RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 84th Texas  
14 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of U.S. Army Sergeant  
15 First Class Gary Lamar Collins and commemorate the 2015 Concert for  
16 Hope.