

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 359

WHEREAS, In 2015, the Honorable Sam Johnson, a member of the United States House of Representatives, is commemorating the 42nd anniversary of his release as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, An alumnus of Woodrow Wilson High School in Dallas, Sam Johnson graduated with a degree in business administration from Southern Methodist University in 1951, and soon thereafter, at the age of 20, he entered the United States Air Force; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Johnson completed 62 combat missions as a fighter pilot during the Korean War, and he went on to become a member of the elite Air Force Thunderbirds and the director of the Air Force Fighter Weapons School; he later served two tours of duty in the Vietnam War; on April 16, 1966, he was flying his 25th combat mission over North Vietnam when his plane was shot down, forcing him to eject into enemy territory; and

WHEREAS, Severely injured, Major Johnson was taken captive and held at the infamous "Hanoi Hilton" prison camp, where he was subjected to horrific beatings, starvation, solitary confinement, and other deplorable treatment; he ultimately endured seven years in the facility before being returned to his homeland on February 17, 1973, and he later chronicled his experiences in his autobiography, *Captive Warriors: A Vietnam POW's Story*, which was published in 1992; and

WHEREAS, Congressman Johnson concluded his exemplary 29-year career in the United States Air Force in 1979, retiring at the rank of colonel; his numerous military commendations and accolades include two Silver Stars, two Legions of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross, a Bronze Star with Valor, two Purple Hearts, four Air Medals, and three Outstanding Unit Awards; moreover, he was retroactively awarded the Prisoner of War Medal following its creation in 1985; and

WHEREAS, After returning to civilian life, this esteemed Texan founded a home-building business, and in 1984 he was elected to the first of four consecutive terms in the Texas House of Representatives; since 1991, he has represented the Third District of Texas in the United States Congress, where he serves on the Committee on Ways and Means and the Health Subcommittee and chairs the Social Security Subcommittee; throughout his career in Congress, he has made the welfare of the men and women in the military one of his foremost priorities; in 2009, he was awarded the National Patriots Award, the highest civilian accolade conferred by the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, and he was named by his peers as the "most admired" Republican in the United States House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, Congressman Johnson and his wife, Shirley, are the parents of 3 children, Gini, Beverly, and the late Bob Johnson, and the grandparents of 10 grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Sam Johnson has demonstrated the highest degree of patriotism, fighting bravely for his country, holding steadfast in captivity, and rendering public service with the utmost integrity, and he is indeed deserving of his fellow citizens' deepest gratitude; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 84th Legislature, hereby honor Congressman Sam Johnson on the 42nd

anniversary of his return from Vietnam and extend to him sincere appreciation for his valiant service to his country; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this Resolution be prepared for Congressman Johnson as an expression of high regard from the Texas Senate.

Taylor of Collin,
Estes

Bettencourt
Birdwell
Burton
Campbell
Creighton
Ellis
Eltife
Fraser
Garcia
Hall

Hancock
Hinojosa
Huffines
Huffman
Kolkhorst
Lucio
Menéndez
Nelson
Nichols

Perry
Rodriguez
Schwertner
Seliger
Taylor of Galveston
Uresti
Watson
West
Whitmire
Zaffirini

Patrick, President of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate

Member, Texas Senate

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on March 11, 2015.

Secretary of the Senate