

**SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 800**

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

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

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

**WHEREAS**, By October 1942, Camp Bowie in Brownwood had grown to 123,000 acres in Brown and Mills Counties, with a 5,000-acre campsite and another 118,000 acres used for training exercises; eight divisions trained at the camp, and many other battalions, regiments, and companies passed through to use the training grounds; there were never fewer than 30,000 men in the camp at any one time, and at one point, its population was 60,000; more than a quarter of a million soldiers passed through Camp Bowie between 1941 and the end of the war; and

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

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

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

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

**RESOLVED**, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 84th Legislature, hereby commemorate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of Camp Bowie in Brownwood.

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President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on May 13, 2015.

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Secretary of the Senate

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Member, Texas Senate