H.R. No. 1270

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, April 18, 2019, marks 77 years since the daring World War II bombing mission known as the Doolittle Raid, and the anniversary comes only nine days after the passing of the raid's last surviving participant, U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Richard "Dick" Cole, on April 9 at the age of 103; and

WHEREAS, Richard Eugene Cole was born in Dayton, Ohio, on September 7, 1915; as a boy, he became fascinated with flying after watching pilots take off from a nearby Army Air Corps test base, and he went on to enlist in the corps in November 1940 as a way of earning a living during the Great Depression; he completed his training and was assigned to the 17th Bombardment Group, serving in Pendleton, Oregon, and then in Columbia, South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, In early February 1942, two months after the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, then-Lieutenant Cole volunteered for a secret mission that was later revealed to be an act of retaliation against Japan; he and the 80 other men who were chosen for the raid were trained in isolation and knew little about the nature of the mission other than the considerable danger they faced; when the originally assigned copilot of then-Lieutenant Colonel Jimmy Doolittle fell ill, Lieutenant Cole was called upon to take his place; the long-awaited day arrived on April 18, when Lieutenant Cole's squadron of modified B-25 bombers took off from the aircraft carrier USS *Hornet* and set out en route to Tokyo; and

WHEREAS, After completing their objectives, Lieutenant Cole and his fellow crewmen were forced to bail out over China; all survived, and Lieutenant Cole continued his service in the China-Burma-India theater; though the raid inflicted minimal damage, it gave a much-needed boost to American morale and struck a blow against Japan's perception of invincibility; in 1967, he retired from the U.S. Air Force as a lieutenant colonel, having received three Distinguished Flying Crosses, a Bronze Star, and an Air Force Commendation Medal; in 2014, he was presented with the Congressional Gold Medal at a ceremony at the White House; and

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Colonel Cole moved to Texas, where he ran a citrus business for a time and eventually settled near the town of Comfort; he shared a long marriage with his wife, Lucia Martha Cole, and took pride in their five children; and

WHEREAS, Dick Cole will forever be remembered for the role he played in one of the most legendary feats of World War II, one whose symbolic power helped to change the course of history, and his steadfast bravery continues to remain a source of inspiration to his fellow Americans; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of Lieutenant Colonel Dick Cole and commemorate the 77th anniversary of the Doolittle Raid; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Dick Cole.

Cyrier

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 1270 was unanimously adopted by a rising vote of the House on April 18, 2019.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Chief Clerk of the House