

By: Cyrier

H.R. No. 1270

R E S O L U T I O N

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

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

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

24           WHEREAS, After completing their objectives, Lieutenant Cole

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

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

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

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

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