H.R. No. 1399

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, During World War II, countless Americans made immense sacrifices in the struggle against tyranny, and among the heroic figures who endured tremendous hardship in behalf of our country was the late Donald Teague, who survived four years in a Japanese prisoner of war camp; and

WHEREAS, Immediately before the war, Mr. Teague was a member of the New Mexico National Guard; though he was released from duty in 1940 as the result of a medical condition, he was determined to serve his nation, and he was readmitted into the military following treatment; and

WHEREAS, When the United States entered the war following the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Mr. Teague participated in the defense of the Bataan Peninsula in the Philippines; captured by the Japanese, he was sent to Camp O'Donnell, a former training center used by the Japanese as a prisoner of war camp; the conditions at the camp were horrific; vast numbers of prisoners died of malnutrition, malaria, and dysentery, and Mr. Teague was assigned to help bury his dead comrades in a mass grave that was only a foot and a half deep; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Teague and his fellow prisoners were subsequently moved to another camp by train, packed so tightly into cattle cars that many died during the journey; they were later shipped away from the Philippines, spending 39 days in the hold of a so-called "hell ship" that had been previously used to transport horses; over the course of his captivity, Mr. Teague's weight dropped to 100 pounds, and near the end of the war, he contracted pleurisy; after being admitted to a Red Cross hospital, he was given the first substantial food he had eaten since his capture; and

WHEREAS, According to a 1990 interview preserved by Mr. Teague's sister, Jean Cummins of Dumas, he briefly considered giving up during his four-year ordeal, but he persevered, determined to return to his family; he was liberated in 1945 and treated at the U.S. Army 42nd Field Hospital in Yokohama, Japan, before being shipped home; in civilian life, he earned a Ph.D. and enjoyed a successful career as a college professor in Illinois and California; he passed away in 1990, at the age of 72; and

WHEREAS, Demonstrating the highest degree of patriotism, Donald Teague fought courageously for his country and steadfastly endured the horrors of his captivity, and the exemplary service he rendered in behalf of his fellow citizens is deserving of the deepest gratitude of every American; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas Legislature hereby pay tribute to the service and sacrifice of Donald Teague during World War II and commend his loved ones for preserving his memory; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for his family as an expression of high regard by the Texas House of Representatives.

Price

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Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 1399 was adopted by the House on May 26, 2021, by a non-record vote.

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Chief Clerk of the House