

By: Flores

S.C.R. No. 49

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, The courageous service of U.S. Army Captain Henry T.
2 Waskow of Belton during World War II has inspired his fellow
3 Americans for nearly 80 years; and

4 WHEREAS, In January 1944, *The Washington Daily News* ran a
5 profoundly moving dispatch by legendary World War II correspondent
6 Ernie Pyle on its front page; the story related the tragic death of
7 Captain Waskow, who led B Company of the 1st Battalion, 143rd
8 Infantry Regiment, and had earned the tremendous respect, loyalty,
9 and affection of the men under his command before being killed in
10 action; and

11 WHEREAS, Captain Waskow first experienced combat during the
12 landings in Salerno, Italy, in September 1943; subsequently, his
13 company fought in the mountains of southern Italy, enduring
14 miserable, freezing conditions; he impressed his men with his
15 efficiency and his calm demeanor, even under artillery and machine
16 gun fire; on December 14, during the ferocious battle for San
17 Pietro, he was leading his men from a tree line to attack a German
18 position when he heard an incoming artillery shell; he shoved his
19 radio operator, crying "Hit the ground!," but he was cut down
20 himself by a piece of shrapnel; and

21 WHEREAS, When it was at last possible for the radio operator
22 to bring Captain Waskow's body back down the mountain three days
23 later, Mr. Pyle witnessed the final farewells of the captain's
24 grief-stricken men and wrote, "In this war I have known a lot of

1 officers who were loved and respected by the soldiers under them.
2 But never have I crossed the trail of any man as beloved as Captain
3 Henry T. Waskow of Belton, Texas"; the heartbreaking account,
4 syndicated by the Scripps-Howard news service and read over the
5 radio, resonated powerfully with the American public as an
6 illustration of humble nobility and the strong bonds of camaraderie
7 forged in wartime; and

8 WHEREAS, Henry T. Waskow was born in DeWitt County on
9 September 24, 1918, to Frank and Mary Waskow, first-generation
10 Americans of German descent; he grew up on a farm in Bell County
11 with seven siblings; quiet, serious, dutiful, and industrious, he
12 graduated as president of his class at Belton High School and
13 attended Temple Junior College before working his way through
14 Trinity University as a campus janitor; he enlisted in the Texas
15 National Guard while preparing for a career in teaching, and after
16 he was called to active duty, he rose quickly through the ranks; in
17 January 1943, he was promoted to captain, and his division was
18 deployed to Algeria that April; and

19 WHEREAS, Captain Waskow's grave near Nettuno, Italy, has been
20 visited by countless people, and he is not forgotten at home; VFW
21 Post No. 4008 in Belton and the Belton New Tech High School @Waskow
22 are named in his honor; and

23 WHEREAS, Exemplifying the highest ideals of the U.S. armed
24 forces, Captain Henry T. Waskow has long been revered as a moving
25 example of the heroism demonstrated by American service members as
26 well as the sacrifices made in defense of our nation, and it is
27 indeed fitting to further honor his memory by officially

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1 commemorating the anniversary of his birth; now, therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, That the 88th Legislature of the State of Texas
3 hereby designate September 24 as Captain Henry T. Waskow Day; and,
4 be it further

5 RESOLVED, That, in accordance with the provisions of Section
6 [391.004](#)(d), Government Code, this designation remain in effect
7 until the 10th anniversary of the date this resolution is finally
8 passed by the legislature.