



HR0951

LRB102 29113 ECR 41048 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, It is highly fitting that the Illinois General Assembly pays honor and respect to individuals who have given their lives in service to our nation; and

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WHEREAS, In late 1941, U.S. Army Air Corps Private First Class John L. Ferguson was a member of the 28th Materiel Squadron, U.S. Army Air Forces, when Japanese forces invaded the Philippine Islands in December; intense fighting continued until the surrender of the Bataan Peninsula on April 9, 1942 and of Corregidor Island on May 6, 1942; and

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WHEREAS, Thousands of U.S. and Filipino service members were captured and interned at POW camps; PFC Ferguson was among those reported captured when U.S. forces in Bataan surrendered to the Japanese; the captured were subjected to the 65-mile Bataan Death March and then held at the Cabanatuan POW camp, where more than 2,500 POWs perished during the war; and

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WHEREAS, According to prison camp and other historical records, PFC Ferguson died on December 10, 1942, and he was buried along with other deceased prisoners in the local Cabanatuan Camp Cemetery in Common Grave 917; and

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1           WHEREAS, Following the war, American Graves Registration  
2 Service (AGRS) personnel exhumed those buried at the  
3 Cabanatuan Camp Cemetery and relocated the remains to a  
4 temporary U.S. military mausoleum near Manila; in 1947, the  
5 AGRS examined the remains in an attempt to identify them; five  
6 of the sets of remains from Common Grave 917 were identified,  
7 but the rest were declared unidentifiable; the unidentified  
8 remains were buried as Unknowns at the Manila American  
9 Cemetery and Memorial on February 15 and 16, 1950; and

10           WHEREAS, In March 2018, the remains associated with Common  
11 Grave 917 were disinterred and sent for analysis to the  
12 Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) laboratory at Joint  
13 Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii; and

14           WHEREAS, Although interred as an Unknown at the Manila  
15 American Cemetery and Memorial, PFC Ferguson's grave was  
16 meticulously cared for by the American Battle Monuments  
17 Commission over the past 70 years; and

18           WHEREAS, PFC Ferguson will return home and be laid to rest  
19 in Gridley on October 1, 2022; therefore, be it

20           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
21 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
22 we honor the life and service of U.S. Army Air Corps Private

1 First Class John L. Ferguson, and we honor all who gave the  
2 ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation; and be it further

3       RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
4 presented to the surviving members of PFC Ferguson's family,  
5 the Illinois Department of Veteran's Affairs, the Secretary of  
6 the Department of Transportation, and the American Battle  
7 Monuments Commission.