



HR0763

LRB103 40136 MST 71826 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, On the night of June 5-6, 1944, more than 6,500
3 elite paratroopers of the 101st Airborne Division, the first
4 of the first, spearheaded the American airborne assault on the
5 Cotentin Peninsula in Normandy, France with the critical
6 missions of securing four causeways leading inland from the
7 beach codenamed 'Utah' and neutralizing enemy resistance in
8 advance of the amphibious landings at dawn on D-Day morning by
9 the 4th Infantry Division; and

10 WHEREAS, Many of the paratroopers were mis-dropped from
11 their designated drop zones; before dawn, a small group led by
12 Major John P. Stopka, 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment,
13 attacked and captured a strategically sited and important
14 German garrison headquarters and strongpoint at Marmion Farm
15 on the outskirts of Ravenoville village; and

16 WHEREAS, Major Stopka made the decision to hold the farm
17 until relief arrived from Utah Beach, thereby denying enemy
18 movement against the northern shoulder of the 101st assault
19 area and the critical exits; and

20 WHEREAS, Throughout D-Day, other mis-dropped paratroopers
21 from mixed elements of the 101st, even some from the 82nd
22 Airborne, arrived at the farm, thereby strengthening the

1 American defense against repeated enemy counter-attacks; the
2 paratroopers held firm until relieved on the early morning of
3 June 7, 1944 by lead elements of 4th Infantry Division; and

4 WHEREAS, On June 6, 2012, the Eternal Heroes Memorial was
5 inaugurated in Ravenoville to honor the Raveno Boys, whose
6 heroic stand made a significant contribution to the success of
7 the amphibious landings on Utah Beach and ultimately the
8 Allied invasion of Normandy on D-Day; and

9 WHEREAS, Among their number were five gallant sons of
10 Illinois, Thomas F. Cahill Jr. of Cook County, Clifford S.
11 Emerick of Washington County, John A. Powers of Peoria County,
12 Joseph P. Powers of Peoria County, and Louis J. Venditti of
13 Cook County; therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
15 HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
16 we declare June 6-7, 2024 as Eternal Heroes Memorial Days in
17 memory of the Illinois Raveno Boys; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
19 presented to the Eternal Heroes Memorial as a token of our
20 esteem and respect.