



HR0302

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives seek to honor all our veterans, especially
4 those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our
5 nation; and

6 WHEREAS, On April 22, 1968, Major Robert Paul Riggins of
7 the United States Air Force, 389th Tactical Fighter Squadron,
8 was commanding a 2-aircraft flight from Da Nang Airbase, South
9 Vietnam; and

10 WHEREAS, Major Riggins had successfully flown 98 combat
11 missions over North Vietnam and was 2 missions away from
12 completing his tour of duty; and

13 WHEREAS, Major Riggins, determined to accomplish his
14 assigned mission, elected to fly despite poor weather
15 conditions over the area of operations; and

16 WHEREAS, Flying that day with First Lieutenant William
17 Chomyk of Hicksville, New York, Major Riggins' F-4D Phantom II
18 (Tail Number 66-8778) was hit by enemy ground fire and was lost
19 over Thua Thien Province near the city of Hue; and

20 WHEREAS, Major Riggins was a highly decorated military

1 aviator, having seen combat in both Korea and Vietnam; he
2 earned the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the
3 Purple Heart, and the Air Medal for his meritorious service; he
4 was also awarded the National Defense Service Medal, the Korea
5 Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, the Air Force
6 Longevity Award, the Vietnam Gallantry Cross - Unit Citation,
7 and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal; and

8 WHEREAS, Major Riggins was a native of Champaign and was an
9 alumnus of the University of Illinois at Champaign - Urbana; he
10 earned his bachelor's degree from the College of Commerce and
11 Business Administration in 1952 and his master's degree from
12 the College of Engineering in 1964; and

13 WHEREAS, Major Riggins was survived by his wife, Betty Sue,
14 and his daughters, Amy and Paula; and

15 WHEREAS, We commemorate the 45th anniversary of Major
16 Riggins and First Lieutenant Chomyk's listing as Missing In
17 Action, hold a solemn vigil for their return to American soil,
18 and give the highest honor to their courage, duty, and
19 sacrifice for their nation in armed aerial combat by engaging
20 enemy forces; therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
22 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that

1 we, along with their families, friends, and a nation grateful
2 for their sacrifice in its defense, mourn the loss of Major
3 Robert Riggins and First Lieutenant William Chomyk; and be it
4 further

5 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
6 presented to the family of Major Riggins as an expression of
7 our remembrance of his steadfast devotion to the principles of
8 duty, honor, and country.