

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.C.R. 59
By: Birdwell
Veteran Affairs & Border Security
6/20/2019
Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

World War II lasted from 1939 until 1945, and the United States entered the war in 1941 following the attack on Pearl Harbor. Over 16 million Americans served their country and its allies over the course of the war. The generation of men and women who served our country in World War II has been called "the greatest generation" for their selfless sacrifice.

The Medal of Honor is the highest military decoration that is awarded by the United States government. The Medal of Honor is presented by the president of the United States, in the name of Congress. The Medal of Honor is only conferred upon members of the United States armed forces who distinguish themselves through conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty while engaged in action against an enemy of the United States, while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force, or while serving with friendly forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.

More than 3,400 Medals of Honor have been awarded to our nation's bravest soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coast guardsmen since the creation of the award in 1861. The Medal of Honor was awarded to 473 Americans during World War II and only four of those 473 Americans are alive today. Charles H. Coolidge of Tennessee, Francis S. Currey of New York, Robert D. Maxwell of Oregon, and Hershel W. Williams of West Virginia all served their country with conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life and therefore deserve the gratitude of the American people.

The president of the United States has the sole authority to designate a state funeral. Historically, the president of the United States has designated state funerals for former presidents, generals, and other extraordinary Americans. Designating a state funeral when the last surviving World War II Medal of Honor recipient dies would be a wonderful way for the American people to unite and honor all 16 million soldiers, sailors, and airmen who served in our armed forces from 1941 to 1945.

RESOLVED

That the 86th Legislature of the State of Texas respectfully urge the president of the United States to designate a state funeral for the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient from World War II.

That the Texas secretary of state forward official copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress, and to all the members of the Texas delegation to Congress with the request that this resolution be entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.