

2013-K1287

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 70th Anniversary of Operation Overlord, otherwise known as D-Day, June 6th

WHEREAS, Throughout our Nation's history, the men and women of America's Armed Forces have preserved our freedom, protected our security and upheld our democratic values; and

WHEREAS, Members of the Armed Forces, who served so valiantly and honorably in wars in which our Nation's freedom was at stake, and during which the United States proudly stood as a defender of liberty and human dignity, deserve a special salute from this Legislative Body; and

WHEREAS, The Second World War, which lasted from 1939 to 1945, was the most widespread war in human history, directly involving more than 100 million people from more than 30 different countries, which were split between two opposing military alliances--the Allies, led by the United States of America and the United Kingdom, and the Axis, led by Nazi Germany and the Empire of Japan; and

WHEREAS, The Axis powers initiated military aggression and maintained the strategic momentum until gradually slowed by Allied resistance in late 1942 and 1943, after which the Allies reversed the momentum and commenced operations to liberate Axis-conquered lands, such operations including Operation Overlord, a massive military and naval effort toward the reclamation of German-occupied Western Europe; and

WHEREAS, The combat operations of Operation Overlord, also known as the D-Day Landings, began on June 6, 1944, with an Allied invasion from England into German-occupied Normandy (France); and

WHEREAS, The landings were conducted in two phases: a nighttime airborne assault by 24,000 United States, British, and Canadian paratroopers and glider-borne soldiers shortly after midnight, followed by an early-morning amphibious landing by Allied infantry and armored divi-

sions onto five beach sites on the Normandy coast; and

WHEREAS, The Allies executed a complex series of deceptions, helping them achieve strategic and tactical surprise over the Germans, who had been led to believe that the main thrust of the expected Allied invasion would involve different times, locations, and methods than actually employed; and

WHEREAS, The Allied paratroopers landed to seize and then hold key bridges and road junctions behind enemy lines against the overwhelming German military force that surrounded them; and

WHEREAS, Despite the effectiveness of Allied deceptions in achieving surprise and partially reducing the strength of German coastal fortifications, the amphibious landings were made into the teeth of a still-lethal, interlocking defense manned by skilled German soldiers wielding state-of-the-art weaponry; and

WHEREAS, The resulting combat was among the bloodiest and most pivotal of the entire global conflict, and the names of its battle sites, such as Omaha Beach, Utah Beach, and the cliffs of Pointe du Hoc, have been embedded into United States military history; and

WHEREAS, Despite the terrible cost in human life, the ultimately successful execution of the D-Day invasion led directly to the liberation of Western Europe, the fall of Adolf Hitler, and the defeat of Nazi Germany during the subsequent 11 months; and

WHEREAS, The heroism of the warriors who fought on D-Day has been depicted in numerous literary and cinematic classics, including "The Longest Day," "Saving Private Ryan," and "Band of Brothers"; and

WHEREAS, June 6, 2014 represents the 70th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings, and serves as a direct reminder of the extraordinary sacrifices made by members of the United States Armed Forces on D-Day, and

also, indirectly, to the sacrifices made during the rest of the Second World War and in all other armed conflicts past, present, and future; and

WHEREAS, During the 70th Anniversary of the Normandy Invasion, Amis Des Veterans Americains (Friends of American Veterans) or AVA will unveil a monument on the town square of Ste. Mere-Eglise, dedicated to Allied troops who gave their lives fighting behind enemy lines in the invasion; and

WHEREAS, The banner of freedom will always wave over this great Nation, the land of the free and the home of the brave; and

WHEREAS, The freedoms and security we cherish as Americans come at a very high price for those serving in the military in times of conflict; it is fitting and proper that we who are the beneficiaries of those who risk their lives, leaving their families behind, express our appreciation and eternal gratitude for their sacrifices and courageous acts; and

WHEREAS, It is fitting and appropriate that the State of New York and its residents recognize this anniversary to honor the courageous individuals who heeded our nation's call and risked their lives, health, and dreams to defend our liberty and national interests; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to urge New York residents to observe the anniversary of the D-Day Landings and hereby proclaim June 6, 2014, as D-Day Remembrance Day, calling upon all New Yorkers to observe this with appropriate ceremonies and activities which honor and give thanks to our distinguished veterans who survived that military operation; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause further to honor all those who participated in the D-Day invasion; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Commander Kenneth F. Governor of the American Legion, Department of New York, Commander Michael Pascal of Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of New York, the National D-Day Memorial, and the National WWII Museum.