

2015-J6120

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 30th Anniversary of the Walter E. Hughes Tri-State Mid-Hudson Chapter of the 82nd Airborne Division Association Inc. on August 14, 2016

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is moved with great respect and reverent esteem to pay tribute to the men and women who so courageously and heroically serve and have served in the Armed Forces of the United States; and

WHEREAS, Members and former members of the Armed Services from the State of New York, who have served so valiantly and honorably in wars in which this country's freedom was at stake, as well as in the preservation of peace in peace-time, deserve a special salute from this Legislative Body; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the Walter E. Hughes Tri-State Mid-Hudson Chapter of the 82nd Airborne Division Association Inc. to be celebrated at a Luncheon on Sunday, August 14, 2016, in the Officers Club at West Point Military Academy, West Point, New York; and

WHEREAS, The members of the Walter E. Hughes Tri-State Mid-Hudson Chapter of the 82nd Airborne Division Association Inc. are honored to recognize its founder, Walter E. Hughes, a distinguished World War II paratrooper who was recently inducted into the New York State Veteran's Hall of Honor; and

WHEREAS, Walter E. Hughes was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1925; at the young age of 12, he worked as a deckhand on his stepfather's tugboat for three dollars a week; when the vessel was pushed into auxiliary service at the start of the war, Walter became a merchant seaman at 14; and

WHEREAS, Four years later, Walter E. Hughes entered into the service

of the United States Army, proudly serving his country during World War II; as a member of the 82nd Airborne, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, he took part in some of most famous battles and missions of the war; and WHEREAS, The 82nd Airborne Division Association was organized in England, prior to the Normandy Invasion in 1944; and

WHEREAS, The 82nd Airborne Division Association is for anyone who has ever served in the 82nd Airborne Division, and who is currently serving on active duty on jump status, or has ever served in any of the uniformed services on either jump or glider status and was honorably discharged; and

WHEREAS, Currently, the 82nd Airborne Division Association is comprised of members who have served with the 11th, 13th, 17th, 82nd, and 101st Airborne Divisions; 187th, 503rd and 508th Airborne Regimental Combat Teams; 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) as well as troopers from Special Forces, Airborne Rangers, Marine Corps Recon, Navy SEALs and Air Force Special Tactics personnel; and

WHEREAS, For many years, the 82nd Airborne Division Association has strived to further develop the bond between current and past Airborne forces of the United States Military, maintain a record of the history and accomplishments of Airborne Troopers, maintain a close liaison with active Division, support the 82nd Airborne Division Memorial Museum, provide scholarships through the Association Educational Fund to recently separated Active Duty Troopers and Dependent Children of Veterans, and Active Duty Troopers, and honor the Jumpmaster, NCO and Trooper of the Year, as well as provide support to Veteran and Active Wounded Warriors of the Division; and

WHEREAS, Today, the 82nd Airborne Division is an active-duty, modular airborne infantry division of the United States Army; the Division is

stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, one of the largest military training areas in the world; and

WHEREAS, The 82nd trains for airborne assault operations into enemy-

denied areas, with a specialization in airfield seizure; under the command of the XVIII Airborne Corps, the 82nd is the Nation's Global Response Force; once ordered, it can mobilize, load, and land anywhere in the world in less than 36 hours to perform combat operations, assist United States allies, and provide humanitarian assistance; and WHEREAS, The 82nd Airborne Division was constituted in the National Army on August 5, 1917, to support the United States' entry into World War I; it was officially organized on August 25, 1917, at Camp Gordon, near Atlanta, Georgia; and

WHEREAS, After noticing that there were men from each of the 48 states in the Division, Vivienne Goodwyn had the honor of choosing the Airborne's nick-name, The All American Division; the original Division shoulder sleeve patch of a red square with a blue circle in the middle would soon have Troopers adding a double AA; and

WHEREAS, The 82nd Airborne Division was one of the first seven United States divisions to arrive in England, and fight in France, where it participated in the Battle of Lorraine in 1918, and the campaigns of St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne; and

WHEREAS, The 82nd Airborne Division demobilized on May 27, 1919, at Camp Mills, New York, after returning home from World War I; it was reconstituted into the Organized Reserves as Headquarters, 82nd Division, on June 24, 1921, and was housed at the Federal Building in Columbia, South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the Division was re-designated on February 13, 1942, as Division Headquarters, 82nd Division, and was ordered into active service on March 25, 1942, at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana, under the command of General Omar Bradley; and WHEREAS, On August 15, 1942, the Division was reorganized and designated the 82nd Airborne Division, the United States Army adopted and developed the airborne concept, and the 82nd would be the first division to receive this designation; and

WHEREAS, Major General Matthew Bunker Ridgway led the Division to

North Africa in May of 1943, where it intensely trained for the airborne assault onto the island of Sicily for Operation HUSKY; in September of 1943, General Mark Clark, Fifth Army, requested the 82nd to drop onto the Salerno beachhead to help secure the Italian foothold established by the Allies; Operation AVALANCHE consisted of two consecutive night jumps

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which accomplished the mission and eliminated any doubt the Allies would be pushed back into the sea; and

WHEREAS, While the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment stayed in Italy to fight, the rest of the 82nd headed for England to prepare and train for Operation NEPTUNE, the airborne assault of Operation OVERLORD, the Allied offensive into Normandy, France; joined by the 507th and the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiments, the 82nd assaulted Normandy with 12,000 Parachute and Glider troops, on June 6, 1944; and

WHEREAS, Their mission was to destroy vital Germany supply bridges and capture causeways leading inland across the flooded areas behind the Normandy beaches where seaborne forces would land to gain control of roads and communications; the 82nd fought for 33 days without relief or replacements, and once again successfully completed the mission; and

WHEREAS, The final airborne assault for the 82nd Airborne Division during World War II was into Holland in September of 1944; Operation MARKET GARDEN would have the All Americans perform a day time jump into Nijmegen; and

WHEREAS, On the next day, 200 men of the 82nd performed a daytime crossing of the fast moving Waal River in an attempt to secure the opposite end of the Nijmegen Bridge; German resistance was fierce, but the All Americans pushed through, secured the bridge, and opened a route to the Rhine River and into Germany; and

WHEREAS, The All Americans briefly rested after Holland, but the final German offensive in December of 1944, the Battle of the Bulge, ended any reprieve; and

WHEREAS, During the drive to end the War, the Division liberated a work camp at Wöbbelin, Germany; the 82nd also received the unconditional surrender of 146,000 men of the 21st German Army at Ludwigstlust; and WHEREAS, World War II ended in May of 1945, and the 82nd Airborne Division would receive the honor of Occupation Duty in Berlin; it is in Berlin where the Division received its second, and most famous nickname, "America's Guard of Honor" from General George S. Patton, after he reviewed the Paratroopers; and

WHEREAS, Following World War II and into the early 1960s, the 82nd Airborne Division trained hard during the Cold War to become the nation's Strategic Reaction Force; they participated in numerous and varied exercises containing up to 60,000 men, within the United States, and trained in Greenland, Alaska, South America, Turkey and Africa; and

WHEREAS, In April of 1965, with communism attempting to emerge in the Western Hemisphere, the 82nd Airborne Division deployed to support Operation POWER PACK in the Dominican Republic; and

WHEREAS, In response the Tet Offensive of 1968, in the Republic of Vietnam, General Westmoreland, MACV commander, requested a brigade of the 82d Airborne Division be sent immediately to support United States operations; after serving 22 months in Vietnam, 3rd Brigade troopers returned to Fort Bragg in December of 1969; and

WHEREAS, On October 25, 1983, the 82nd was called to the tiny island of Grenada to assist the nation's democratic government to defeat a communist uprising; the first unit to deploy in Operation URGENT FURY was a task force of the 2-325th Infantry; and

WHEREAS, Operation URGENT FURY tested the division's ability to deploy as a rapid deployment force, however, the 82nd was once again successful in defending democracy and American interests; and

WHEREAS, On December 20, 1989, the All Americans conducted their first combat jump since World War II onto Torrijos International Airport, Panama, to oust ruthless dictator, Manuel Noriega, and restore the duly elected government to power; the victorious paratroopers returned to

Fort Bragg on January 12, 1990, in style, conducting a mass jump onto Sicily Drop Zone, Fort Bragg; and

WHEREAS, Six days after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990, the 82nd became the vanguard of the largest deployment of American troops since Vietnam; the first unit to deploy to Saudi Arabia on August 8, 1990, was a task force of the 2nd Brigade; and

WHEREAS, Soon after, the rest of the division followed; their intense training began in anticipation of paratroopers fighting it out in the desert with the heavily armored Iraqi army; their training concentrated on chemical defense, anti-armor tactics and live-fire maneuver exercises; the battle cry picked up by the paratroopers was "The road home ... is through Baghdad."; and

WHEREAS, On January 16, 1991, Operation DESERT STORM began when an armada of Allied war planes pounded Iraqi targets; the ground war began six weeks later on February 23, 1991, with the 82nd conducting flanking movements deep inside Iraq; and

WHEREAS, After the liberation of Kuwait, the 82nd began deployment back to Fort Bragg, with most of the division returning by the end of

April of 1991; when America was attacked on September 11, 2001, President George W. Bush called upon the American military to fight global terrorism; and

WHEREAS, In June of 2002, Task Force Panther, comprised of elements from the 505th Infantry and other 82nd units, deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF); Task Force Devil, comprised of the 504th Infantry and support elements replaced Task Force Panther in January of 2003; and

WHEREAS, In February of 2003, 2nd Brigade, deployed with the Division Headquarters to Kuwait in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF); the Division conducted sustained combat operations throughout Iraq; the 2nd Brigade remained in Iraq attached to the 1st Armored Division and continued to conduct combat missions; and

WHEREAS, The Division Headquarters along with 3rd Brigade and elements of Division Artillery, Division Support Command, and Aviation returned to Iraq in August of 2003 to continue command and control over combat operations in and around Baghdad; and

WHEREAS, The 1st Brigade deployed to conduct combat operations in OIF, in January of 2004, and the 2nd Brigade redeployed to Fort Bragg in February; the Division Headquarters was relieved by the 1st Marine Expeditionary Division in March of 2004, and the remaining 82nd forces in Iraq redeployed to Fort Bragg by the end of April of 2004; and

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WHEREAS, In September of 2004, the 82nd's Deployment Ready Force, 1-505 deployed in support of OEF6, supporting Joint Task Force -76 and the Afghanistan elections; in December of 2004, the 82nd's 1-17th Cavalry, the 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 325th Infantry deployed to Iraq to provide a safe and secure environment for the country's first-ever free national elections; in September 2005, Task Force 2- 325 and Task Force 3-504 deployed to Iraq in support of the Iraqi national elections once again, and units redeployed in December of 2005 and January of 2006 respectively; and

WHEREAS, More than 3,600 Paratroopers from the 82nd, conducted a no-notice deployment in support of Joint Task Force Katrina for Operation All American Assist on September 3, 2005; while supporting relief efforts in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, the Task Force led daily search-and-rescue operations in high water areas, resulting in more than 900 people and countless pets rescued; additionally, they evacuated almost 5,000 residents from throughout New Orleans and the surrounding area; and

WHEREAS, In June of 2006, the Division was reorganized into a modular division structure which included the 1st Brigade Combat Team, the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, the 4th Brigade Combat Team, the 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade, and the Headquarter and Headquarters Battalion; and

WHEREAS, The 2nd Brigade Combat Team deployed to OIF in January of 2007, as the lead brigade of General Petraeus' Surge Strategy to reclaim Baghdad from insurgents and the 1st Brigade Combat Team deployed to Iraq to provide theater security throughout the country; and

WHEREAS, The Division Headquarters and Division Special Troops Battalion (IF Gladius) and other Division elements deployed to Afghanistan in early 2007 for a 15-month assignment as Combined Joint Task Force 82 (CJTF-82) and the United States troop contribution to NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF); and

WHEREAS, During Operation ENDURING FREEDOM VIII, CRT-82, commanded by Major General David M. Rodriguez, served as the National Command Element for over 27,000 United States Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and civilians in Afghanistan; in 2009, 2nd Brigade Combat Team assumed the role as the ground component of the Global Response Force for the

Department of Defense, and in 2010, they deployed to Haiti in support of humanitarian relief following a devastating earthquake; and

WHEREAS, The 82nd Airborne Division received orders from Forces Command on March 2, 2009, to prepare, once again, for deployment in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM; they departed in May of 2009, for Regional Command East (RC-E), Afghanistan, and accepted the transition of authority from the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) on June 3, 2009; the 4th Brigade Combat Team of the division, along with 700 additional training and support personnel, arrived in the country in August of 2009, and took up positions in RC - West and South; and

WHEREAS, CJTF-82s mission was to support the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) in rebuilding the region's security forces, social institutions, including governance, economics, and infrastructure, while neutralizing an insurgency hindering regional stability; in May of 2011, 2nd Brigade Combat Team deployed to Iraq in support of Operation NEW DAWN; and

WHEREAS, Today, as they have in recent deployments and throughout the

Division's history, the troopers who wear the red, white and blue patch of the 82nd Airborne Division are truly America's Guard of Honor; and WHEREAS, Our Nation's veterans deserve to be recognized, commended and thanked by the people of the State of New York for their service and for their dedication to their communities, their State and their Nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the Walter E. Hughes Tri-State Mid-Hudson Chapter of the 82nd Airborne Division Association Inc. on August 14, 2016; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Walter E. Hughes Tri-State Mid-Hudson Chapter of the 82nd Airborne Division Association Inc.