

Enrolled

House Joint Memorial 17

Sponsored by Representative WEIDNER; Representatives BAILEY, BARKER, BARNHART, BARTON, BENTZ, BERGER, BOONE, BUCKLEY, CAMERON, CLEM, CONGER, DAVIS, DEMBROW, DOHERTY, ESQUIVEL, FAGAN, FREDERICK, FREEMAN, GALLEGOS, GARRETT, GELSER, GILLIAM, GOMBERG, GORSEK, HANNA, HARKER, HICKS, HOLVEY, HOYLE, HUFFMAN, JENSON, JOHNSON, KENNEMER, KENY-GUYER, KOMP, KOTEK, KRIEGER, LIVELY, MATTHEWS, MCKEOWN, MCLANE, NATHANSON, OLSON, PARRISH, REARDON, SMITH, SPRENGER, THATCHER, THOMPSON, TOMEI, UNGER, VEGA PEDERSON, WHISNANT, WHITSETT, WILLIAMSON, WITT, Senators BAERTSCHIGER JR, BOQUIST, CLOSE, COURTNEY, DEVLIN, DINGFELDER, FERRIOLI, GEORGE, GIROD, HANSELL, HASS, JOHNSON, KNOPP, KRUSE, MONNES ANDERSON, OLSEN, PROZANSKI, ROBLAN, ROSENBAUM, STARR, STEINER HAYWARD, THOMSEN, WHITSETT

To the President of the United States and the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled:

We, your memorialists, the Seventy-seventh Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

Whereas Leonard DeWitt served with the famed 41st Infantry "Sunset" Division of the Army National Guard during World War II; and

Whereas Leonard DeWitt defended a ridge in New Guinea against massing Japanese soldiers; and

Whereas Leonard DeWitt took personal initiative, single-handedly attacking the Japanese troops before they could sweep his company off the ridge; and

Whereas Leonard DeWitt engaged in brutal hand-to-hand combat to protect his fellow soldiers and maintain the American position; and

Whereas the commanding general of the Sixth Army approved the nomination of Leonard DeWitt for the Medal of Honor, stating that "Sergeant DeWitt's conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty are worthy of the highest recognition"; and

Whereas the Medal of Honor nomination languished on the desk of General Douglas MacArthur; and

Whereas Leonard DeWitt was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the United States Army's second-highest honor; and

Whereas 70 years after the battle, Leonard DeWitt's heroism is still deserving of the highest recognition and honor; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:

(1) We, the members of the Seventy-seventh Legislative Assembly, assert that not awarding Leonard DeWitt the Medal of Honor for his actions against Japanese forces in New Guinea during World War II was a regrettable oversight.

(2) The Congress of the United States of America is respectfully urged to direct the Pentagon to reopen and review Leonard DeWitt's Medal of Honor nomination and upgrade his Distinguished Service Cross to a Medal of Honor due to the oversight that allowed his Medal of Honor nomination package to languish after being approved by his commanding general.

(3) A copy of this memorial shall be sent to the President of the United States, to the Senate Majority Leader, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and to each member of the Oregon Congressional Delegation.

Adopted by House May 23, 2013

Ramona J. Line, Chief Clerk of House

Tina Kotek, Speaker of House

Adopted by Senate June 13, 2013

Peter Courtney, President of Senate