

**Amendment - 1st Reading-white - Requested by: Jacinda Morigeau - (S) Education and Cultural Resources**

69th Legislature - 2025

Drafter: Pad McCracken,

SJ0020.001.001

1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 20  
2 INTRODUCED BY M. CUFFE, E. BYRNE  
3

4 A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF  
5 MONTANA RECOGNIZING THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF WORLD WAR II AND MONTANA'S  
6 VETERANS OF THAT WAR.

7  
8 WHEREAS, Montana's 163rd Infantry Regiment, 41st Sunset Infantry Division, known to the world as the  
9 Fighting Jungleers, was called to active duty on September 16, 1940, for 1 year of training; and

10 WHEREAS, on December 7, 1941, the United States came under attack by Japanese forces at Pearl  
11 Harbor and locations throughout the Pacific, with the United States declaring war on December 8, 1941, and  
12 subsequently declaring war on Germany and Italy; and

13 WHEREAS, the largest ever mobilization of American power took place, ultimately calling up over 15  
14 million U.S. men and women to serve from 1941 to 1946. Over 75,000 Montanans served as a key part of that  
15 force and over 6,000 Montana women volunteered to serve in the various military services and auxiliary  
16 services in World War II, including the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC), Women's Army Corps (WAC),  
17 Army Nurse Corps (ANC), United States Navy Reserve (women's reserve), Women Accepted For Volunteer  
18 Emergency Service (WAVES), Women's Reserve of the Coast Guard (SPARS), Women Airforce Service Pilots  
19 (WASP), Public Health Service (PHS), and the Cadet Nurse Corps (CNC); and

20 WHEREAS, many thousands of Indian Native American men and women of Montana served in all  
21 major elements of the United States military during World War II with honor and great patriotism. They served  
22 as infantryman, code talkers, air crewman, nurses, and many other roles throughout all branches of the United  
23 States military. The 163rd Infantry Regiment had over 230 Indians Native Americans as members, representing  
24 the eight tribal nations located in Montana, all of whom fought with distinction as Jungleers; and

25 WHEREAS, the 163rd Infantry Regiment, Montana National Guard, and 41st Infantry Division served  
26 with distinction at Fort Lewis and various locations on the West Coast of the United States until their departure  
27 to Australia in April 1942 as a part of the Southwest Pacific Command, going on to fight in the Pacific Theater of  
28 World War II; and

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1            WHEREAS, Montana's 163rd Infantry Regiment was recognized as the first U.S. unit to defeat Imperial  
2    Japanese forces at the Battle of Sanananda, Papua New Guinea, in January 1943. They were subsequently  
3    recognized by the 28th Montana Legislative Assembly through resolution and were the inspiration for a famous  
4    painting by Irwin "Shorty" Shope in April 1943; and

5            WHEREAS, the 163rd Infantry Regiment served in the Pacific Theater in three major campaigns: the  
6    Papuan Campaign in 1943, where they won epic battles at Sanananda, Gona, and Kumusi River; the New  
7    Guinea Campaign in 1944, where they won the battles of Aitape, Wadke, and "Bloody" Biak; and the Southern  
8    Philippines Campaign in 1945, where they won battles at Zamboanga, Sanga-Sanga Island, Jolo, and captured  
9    the key village of Calinan from seasoned Japanese land forces, stopping only because hostilities were ceased  
10   due to the dropping of atomic weapons at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. They then became an occupation  
11   force on the Japanese mainland before being demobilized in Japan on January 1, 1946, and sent home after  
12   over 5 years of active duty; and

13           WHEREAS, the First Special Service Force, a unique joint US-Canadian special operations force, was  
14   secretly formed at Fort William Henry Harrison near Helena, Montana, in April through July 1942, to organize  
15   and train for the mission known as Operation Plough; and

16           WHEREAS, the First Special Service Force went on to serve in both the Pacific Theater and the  
17   European Theater, where they fought in the Aleutians Campaign 1943, the Naples-Foggia Campaign 1943-  
18   1944, the Anzio Rome-Arno Campaign 1944, recognized as being the first unit into Rome on June 4, 1944, the  
19   Southern France Campaign, and the Rhineland Campaign. They were inactivated December 5, 1944, at  
20   Villeneuve-Loubet, France, without losing a battle and with battle casualties equivalent to 137% of its strength.  
21   The members went on to serve in the 474th Infantry Regiment in Norway through the end of the European  
22   conflict as well as with other historical military units such as the 45th Infantry Division; and

23           WHEREAS, Camp Rimini War Dog Reception and Training Center was established in late 1942 west of  
24   Helena at a former Civilian Conservation Corps site, where over 800 dogs and their handlers trained as a part  
25   of the effort to disrupt the Axis powers. Unit members would go on to acquitted themselves in places along great  
26   circle military air routes as search and rescue and providing specialized transport in remote areas of the  
27   Northern Hemisphere; and

28           WHEREAS, the Army Air Force organized and trained bomber forces throughout Montana at such

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1 locations as Great Falls, Lewistown, and Cutbank from 1941 to 1945, training personnel in the use of heavy  
2 bombers that were ultimately deployed to both the European and Pacific Theaters of World War II; and

3 WHEREAS, the 7th Ferrying Command, Air Transport Command, was formed at what is now the Great  
4 Falls International Airport and at what is now Malmstrom AFB, to carry out the mission of providing aircraft and  
5 critical supplies to our allies over the great circle route, a critical part of global war air operation of World War II;  
6 and

7 WHEREAS, specialized units such as the first all-Black airborne unit, the 555th Parachute Battalion,  
8 known as the Triple Nickels, trained and served in Montana at Missoula fighting forest fires throughout Montana  
9 and the Northwest; and

10 WHEREAS, the people of Montana overwhelmingly supported the World War II efforts in many ways on  
11 the home front, providing food and other strategic supplies and minerals and meeting or exceeding the quotas  
12 for the eight war bond drives; and

13 WHEREAS, the population of Montana in 1941 was 558,000 people and only 514,000 in 1946; and

14 WHEREAS, Montanans supported, fought, died, and were wounded in all theaters of World War II.

15 Joseph Howard Kinsey wrote in his text "High, Wide and Handsome": "--of the more than 15 million men and  
16 women in the US Armed forces during World War II, Montana furnished 75,000 to the effort."; "Proportionately  
17 this was near the top of all states. In World War II as in World War I, Montanans were quick to enlist, and they  
18 were healthy; the proportion rejected because of physical defect was smaller than the national average. Further  
19 the Montana death rate in World War II was only exceeded by that of New Mexico in proportion to population.  
20 Montana [also] had the record of oversubscribing first in eight World War II saving bond drives."

21  
22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF  
23 THE STATE OF MONTANA:

24 That the 69th Legislature of the State of Montana recognizes the 80th anniversary of the end of World  
25 War II and recognizes all Montanans who served in the armed forces, at home and abroad, and all Montanans  
26 who aided in the war effort during World War II.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send a copy of this resolution to the  
28 Governor of Montana, the Department Commander of the American Legion of Montana, the State Commander,

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1 the State Senior Vice Commander, the State Junior Vice Commander, and the State Adjutant/Quartermaster of  
2 the Veterans of Foreign Wars of Montana, the State Commander of the Disabled American Veterans of  
3 Montana, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, each of the federally recognized tribal governments in Montana,  
4 and each member of the Montana Congressional Delegation.

5

- END -

AMEND