
ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION

Relating to: commending the life and military service of Major Thomas C. Griffin (retired), U.S. Army Air Corps.

Whereas, Thomas C. Griffin was born in Green Bay, Wisconsin, to Jane and John Griffin on July 10, 1916, and passed away on February 26, 2013, in Green Township, Ohio; and

Whereas, Thomas grew up during the Great Depression, witnessing his father's hardworking spirit and drive to never go without, influencing a young Thomas to live a life of dedication and hard work; and

Whereas, Thomas was fascinated throughout his childhood with aviation heroes Charles Lindbergh and James Doolittle, leading him to attend college and join the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC); and

Whereas, Thomas's ROTC experience led him to grow fonder of aviation and increased his desire to serve his country; and

Whereas, upon graduation, Thomas was commissioned a second lieutenant in the United States Army Coast Artillery Corps, later volunteering for aviation cadet training and subsequently being rated as a navigator and recommissioned in the Army Air Corps, 17th Bomb Group; and

Whereas, Lt. Griffin was reassigned to Eglin Field, Florida, where he and 119 other aviators were asked to volunteer for a classified mission, about which they were provided no details; and

Whereas, the mission, now named "Special Aviation Project #1," consisted of intense training including learning how to take off in a B-25 in 250 feet or less, a feat that was never accomplished before on a fully loaded bomber; and

Whereas, Lt. Griffin and his fellow aviators, upon completion of special training, were reassigned to the Navy's newest carrier, the USS *Hornet*, to carry out their mission, which was now disclosed as bombing Tokyo; and

Whereas, on April 18, 1942, at 0820, Lieutenant Colonel Jimmy Doolittle led the first of 16 B-25s off the deck of the *Hornet*, including Lt. Griffin's B-25, the Whirling Dervish; and

Whereas, the distance to Japan was 650 nautical miles (300 miles longer than planned), yet the 16 B-25s known as the Doolittle Raiders continued with their mission at great personal risk, carrying out a successful bombing campaign on Tokyo; and

Whereas, Lt. Griffin's crew, upon completion of the bombing run, turned toward China with the anticipation of landing safely, but instead crash-landed behind enemy lines, where they would stay for seven days; and

Whereas, Lt. Griffin, upon leaving China, was reassigned to a B-26 crew in the European theater of war, conducting bombing missions over northern Africa and Italy; and

Whereas, Lt. Griffin's B-26 was shot down by German aircraft over Sicily on July 4, 1943; and

Whereas, Lt. Griffin was captured by German forces once he was on the ground, and was held at the Stalag Luft III prisoner-of-war camp for the next 22 months; and

Doonthe raid, teaching how the courage and actions of a few can change the morale and discourse of an entire country; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That the legislature salutes Thomas Griffin's military service and mourns his passing.

Representative Robin J. Vos
Speaker of the Assembly

Senator Michael G. Ellis
President of the Senate

Date

Jeffrey Renk
Senate Chief Clerk