

**STATE OF MAINE**

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**IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD**

**TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-ONE**

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**JOINT RESOLUTION URGING THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
UNITED STATES TO DESIGNATE A STATE FUNERAL FOR THE  
LAST LIVING WORLD WAR II MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT**

**WE**, your Memorialists, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Maine now assembled in the First Regular Session, most respectfully present and petition the President of the United States and the United States Congress as follows:

**WHEREAS**, World War II, the most widespread war in history, lasted from 1939 until 1945; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States entered the war in 1941, following an attack on Pearl Harbor by Japanese fighter planes; and

**WHEREAS**, over 16 million Americans served their country and the Allied powers over the course of the war; and

**WHEREAS**, the men and women who served our country in World War II have been collectively called the "greatest generation" for their selfless sacrifice; and

**WHEREAS**, the Medal of Honor is the highest military decoration that is awarded by the United States Government; and

**WHEREAS**, the Medal of Honor is presented by the President of the United States in the name of the Congress of the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, the Medal of Honor is conferred only upon members of the Armed Forces of the United States who distinguished themselves through conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of their lives above and beyond the call of duty while engaged in action against an enemy of the United States, while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force or while serving with friendly forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States was not a belligerent party; and

**WHEREAS**, more than 3,400 Medals of Honor have been awarded since its creation in 1861; the Medal of Honor was awarded to 473 Americans during World War II; and only 2 of those 473 Americans are still alive today; and

**WHEREAS**, each of these courageous servicemen, Charles H. Coolidge of Tennessee and Hershel Woodrow Williams of West Virginia, risked his life while serving his country with conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity and therefore deserves the gratitude of the American people; and

**WHEREAS**, the President of the United States has the sole authority to designate a state funeral for a person who has rendered distinguished service to the Nation; and

**WHEREAS**, historically, the President of the United States has designated state funerals for former presidents, generals and other extraordinary Americans; and

**WHEREAS**, our Nation is currently divided and yearns for a unifying national event; and

**WHEREAS**, holding a state funeral for the last surviving World War II Medal of Honor recipient would provide a deeply meaningful way for the American people to unite and honor all 16 million members of the Armed Forces of the United States who served from 1941 to 1945; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED:** That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirtieth Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, respectfully urge and request that the President of the United States designate a state funeral for the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient from World War II; and be it further

**RESOLVED:** That suitable copies of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President of the United States, to the President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and to each Member of the Maine Congressional Delegation.