

**No. R-250. House concurrent resolution recognizing March 25, 2024 as National Medal of Honor Day in Vermont.**

(H.C.R.191)

Offered by: Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs

Whereas, the Medal of Honor is the U.S. Armed Forces' highest accolade for extraordinary military valor, and

Whereas, in 1861, President Abraham Lincoln signed Public Resolution 82, the original Medal of Honor legislation, and

Whereas, the first recipients of the Medal of Honor were a group of soldiers known as Andrews' Raiders who led a daunting mission to cross Confederate lines and steal a train, and six of these soldiers were honored on March 25, 1863, and

Whereas, during the Civil War, 61 Vermonters, defined as having either been born or enlisted in the State, were Medal of Honor recipients, and

Whereas, the most unusual recipient was Willie Johnston, who, as an 11-year-old resident of the Northeast Kingdom community of Salem, begged to accompany his father upon the older Johnston's 1861 military enlistment, and

Whereas, Willie Johnston was accepted as a drummer in D Company of the 3rd Vermont Volunteer Infantry Regiment, and

Whereas, during the 1862 Peninsula Campaign, when Union forces failed to invade the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia, and were forced to flee down the Virginia peninsula, young Johnston proved the only drummer in his division to retain his instrument through the harrowing ordeal, and

Whereas, on September 16, 1863, when Willie Johnston was only 13 years of age, U.S. Secretary of War Edwin Stanton presented him with this special medal, and he remains the youngest recipient to this day, and

Whereas, other Vermonters were awarded the Medal of Honor for service during the Indian Wars (1), the Philippines Campaign (1), interim periods (2), World War II (2), and the Vietnam War (1), and

Whereas, Congress established National Medal of Honor Day, first observed in 1991, "to foster public appreciation and recognition of Medal of Honor Recipients," now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly recognizes March 25, 2024 as National Medal of Honor Day in Vermont, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Robert Burke, Director of the Vermont Office of Veterans Affairs, and to William Mattoon in Springfield.