

Senate Concurrent Resolution 8

Sponsored by Senator SOLLMAN (Presession filed.)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**. The statement includes a measure digest written in compliance with applicable readability standards.

Digest: Honors the life and service of Private Billy Calkins. (Flesch Readability Score: 66.1).
Recognizes and honors Private William Ezra Leon "Billy" Calkins (1925-1942) for his service to his country.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1
2 Whereas Private William Ezra Leon "Billy" Calkins was born to Joseph and Evalena (Eva)
3 Calkins in August 1925, and he was raised in Washington County, Oregon; and

4 Whereas Private Calkins had a strong desire to serve his country, so he lied about his age to
5 join the United States Army at the age of 16; and

6 Whereas Private Calkins was serving in the Philippines with Company B of the 31st Infantry
7 Regiment in December 1941 when Japanese forces invaded the islands; and

8 Whereas Private Calkins was captured on the Bataan Peninsula, along with tens of thousands
9 of other United States and Filipino troops; and

10 Whereas in April 1942, Private Calkins and an estimated 75,000 other prisoners of war were
11 gathered together by Japanese forces and forced to march 65 miles to various prison camps in what
12 came to be known as the Bataan Death March; and

13 Whereas the troops on the march were subjected to severe physical and psychological abuse,
14 starvation and summary executions, leading to thousands of deaths; and

15 Whereas Private Calkins survived the march to reach Cabanatuan prisoner of war camp; and

16 Whereas prisoners at the camp endured horrific conditions and abuse, and death rates soared
17 due to lack of medicine and food; and

18 Whereas Private Calkins died on November 1, 1942, and he was buried in a common grave
19 numbered 704; and

20 Whereas after the war, the remains of Private Calkins and others in mass graves were exhumed;
21 and

22 Whereas while some remains could be identified, the remains of Private Calkins and others were
23 reinterred as unknown soldiers at the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial; and

24 Whereas in 2018, as part of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency's Cabanatuan Project,
25 the unidentified remains associated with common grave 704 were again exhumed for forensic anal-
26 ysis; and

27 Whereas scientists at the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System were able to use DNA to
28 identify the remains of Private Calkins; and

29 Whereas Private Calkins' remains were returned to Oregon and he was finally laid to rest next
30 to his mother's grave on September 13, 2024, at Fir Lawn Memorial Park in Hillsboro, with full

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted.
New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 military honors; and

2 Whereas Private Calkins was just 17 years old when he died, and he will never be forgotten;
3 and

4 Whereas Private Calkins was an outstanding soldier who served his country with honor and
5 distinction; and

6 Whereas Private Calkins' awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal with oak leaf
7 cluster, the Purple Heart, the Prisoner of War Medal, the Good Conduct Medal, the American De-
8 fense Service Medal with Foreign Service Clasp, the World War II Victory Medal, the Presidential
9 Unit Citation with two bronze oak leaf clusters, the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Philippine De-
10 fense Medal with bronze star and the Philippine Republic Presidential Unit Citation; and

11 Whereas Private Calkins' selfless devotion to duty exemplified the spirit and values of the
12 United States Army; now, therefore,

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

14 That we, the members of the Eighty-third Legislative Assembly, recognize and honor Private
15 William Ezra Leon "Billy" Calkins for his service to his country.

16
