



State of Tennessee

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 114

By Senator Bailey

and

Representatives Williams, Travis, Cameron Sexton

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate A.T. Gillahan on the celebration of his 100th birthday.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly pay tribute to those citizens who are celebrating special occasions in their estimable lives; and

WHEREAS, Mr. A.T. Gillahan of Cookeville celebrated his 100th birthday on January 17, 2017, a milestone that was commemorated as yet another precious souvenir of life's rich pageant; and

WHEREAS, the anniversary of Mr. Gillahan's 100th year of life coincides with the seventy-sixth anniversary of his being drafted to serve in the United States Army during World War II; and

WHEREAS, A.T. Gillahan hails from a family that takes pride in military service to this country: his sister was a military nurse in World War II; his oldest brother served in World War I; his great-grandfather served in the War of 1812; and his great-great-grandfather served in the Revolutionary War; and

WHEREAS, unlike most young men during the time of World War II, A.T. Gillahan did not go into the service immediately upon turning eighteen; instead, he was granted a six-year deferment because of his employment with the Chrysler Corporation in Detroit, Michigan, which at the time was also an important manufacturer of military tanks and vehicles; and

WHEREAS, upon being called back to the draft board on his twenty-fourth birthday, Mr. Gillahan was selected for the cavalry and sent to Fort Riley in Kansas for training; and

WHEREAS, A.T. Gillahan decided to become an aviation cadet and passed the tests necessary to become a pilot, making him one of the few individuals to command both horses and airplanes during his military service; and

WHEREAS, even so, neither cavalry nor aviation would become Mr. Gillahan's area of expertise; though he applied to rejoin the cavalry, he was instead sent to radio mechanics and radio operators school to learn the dot-and-dash patterns of Morse Code; and

WHEREAS, although he completed officer candidate school, he was still unassigned when he was granted a furlough to visit loved ones at home; once the furlough ended, he became a staff sergeant in the Second Army headquartered in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, the Second Army later became the Eighth Army and was stationed in New Guinea, ultimately becoming an army of occupation in Japan following the country's surrender. Mr. Gillahan recounts his time below decks in a ship headed for Japan as the worst experience of his four-year service in the Army; during the twenty-one-day cramped and hot voyage with 10,000 total individuals on a ship meant to convey only 6,000, he lost thirty-two pounds and weighed only 110 pounds; and

WHEREAS, ultimately serving as a teletype operator for the Eighth Army's chiefs of staff, A.T. Gillahan kept status records of all units under their command, including for General Robert L. Eichelberger and Lt. General Clovis Byers; and

WHEREAS, before Mr. Gillahan was to be discharged from his military duties, General Eichelberger requested he extend his service three more years and offered him a promotion from

staff sergeant to master sergeant; however, Mr. Gillahan, eager to get back home to his wife, declined; and

WHEREAS, for his World War II service, A.T. Gillahan earned a Bronze Star and a citation for the risk he took to deliver classified papers through an area held by the Japanese; and

WHEREAS, upon his discharge from the Army and his return to Michigan, he served for eight years in the National Guard as first sergeant of a heavy mortar company; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gillahan's grandson has followed in his grandfather's footsteps, serving in the Michigan National Guard; he is being promoted to lieutenant colonel and has asked his grandfather to participate in the rank-change ceremony; and

WHEREAS, as he approaches his eleventh decade, A.T. Gillahan is an inspiration to younger generations as a U.S. Army veteran who served valiantly when his country came to call; and

WHEREAS, we wish to grasp this golden opportunity to specially recognize one of Tennessee's most outstanding citizens on this very special occasion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and congratulate Mr. A.T. Gillahan on the celebration of his 100th birthday and extend to him our best wishes for much continued success and happiness.

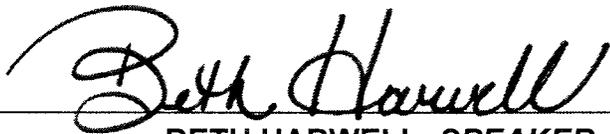
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.

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ADOPTED: February 23, 2017



RANDY McNALLY
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE



BETH HARWELL, SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APPROVED this 28th day of February 2017



BILL HASLAM, GOVERNOR