Public Law 106–142
106th Congress

Joint Resolution

Commending the World War II veterans who fought in the Battle of the Bulge, and for other purposes.

Dec. 7, 1999
[H.J. Res. 65]

Whereas the battle in the European theater of operations during World War II known as the Battle of the Bulge was fought from December 16, 1944, to January 25, 1945;

Whereas the Battle of the Bulge was a major German offensive in the Ardennes forest region of Belgium and Luxembourg which took Allied forces by surprise and was intended to split the Allied forces in Europe by breaking through the Allied lines, crippling the Allied fuel supply lines, and exacerbating tensions within the alliance;

Whereas 600,000 American troops, joined by 55,000 British soldiers and other Allied forces, participated in the Battle of the Bulge, overcoming numerous disadvantages in the early days of the battle that included fewer numbers, treacherous terrain, and bitter weather conditions;

Whereas the Battle of the Bulge resulted in 81,000 American and 1,400 British casualties, of whom approximately 19,000 American and 200 British soldiers were killed, with the remainder wounded, captured, or listed as missing in action;

Whereas the worst atrocity involving Americans in the European theater during World War II, known as the Malmédy Massacre, occurred on December 17, 1944, when 86 unarmed American prisoners of war were gunned down by elements of the German 1st SS Panzer Division;

Whereas American, British, and other Allied forces overcame great odds throughout the battle, including most famously the action of the 101st Airborne Division in holding back German forces at the key Belgian crossroads town of Bastogne, thereby preventing German forces from achieving their main objective of reaching Antwerp as well as the Meuse River line;

Whereas the success of American, British, and other Allied forces in defeating the German attack made possible the defeat of Nazi Germany 4 months later in April 1945;

Whereas thousands of United States veterans of the Battle of the Bulge have traveled to Belgium and Luxembourg in the years since the battle to honor their fallen comrades who died during the battle;

Whereas the peoples of Belgium and Luxembourg, symbolizing their friendship and gratitude toward the American soldiers who fought

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to secure their freedom, have graciously hosted countless veterans groups over the years;

Whereas the City of Bastogne has an annual commemoration of the battle and its annual Nuts Fair has been expanded to include commemoration of the legendary one-word reply of "Nuts" by Brigadier General Anthony McAuliffe of the 101st Airborne Division when called upon by the opposing German commander at Bastogne to surrender his forces to much stronger German forces;

Whereas the Belgian people erected the Mardasson Monument to honor the Americans who fought in the Battle of the Bulge as well as to commemorate their sacrifices and service during World War II;

Whereas the 55th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge in 1999 will be marked by many commemorative events by Americans, Belgians, and Luxembourgers; and

Whereas the friendship between the United States and both Belgium and Luxembourg is strong today in part because of the Battle of the Bulge: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress—

(1) commends the veterans of the United States Army, the British Army, and military forces of other Allied nations who fought during World War II in the German Ardennes offensive known as the Battle of the Bulge;

(2) honors those who gave their lives during that battle;

(3) authorizes the President to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to honor the veterans of the Battle of the Bulge with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities; and

(4) calls upon the President to reaffirm the bonds of friendship between the United States and both Belgium and Luxembourg.

Approved December 7, 1999.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.J. Res. 65:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 106–352, Pt. 1 (Comm. on Veterans' Affairs).
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 145 (1999):
Oct. 5, considered and passed House.
Nov. 19, considered and passed Senate.