

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2013

SENATE RESOLUTION

HONORING CAPTAIN EDOUARD J. JACQUES OF COVENTRY, RHODE ISLAND, FOR
HIS HEROIC MILITARY SERVICE TO OUR NATION DURING WORLD WAR II,
EARNING HIM THE RHODE ISLAND STAR

Introduced By: Senators Raptakis, Kettle, Felag, Paiva Weed, and Pichardo

Date Introduced: February 06, 2013

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, Edouard J. Jacques was born on February 6, 1921, in West Warwick, Rhode
2 Island, to Leon and Angelina Jacques. A life-long Rhode Islander, he was raised in West
3 Warwick and now lives in Coventry with his wife of 69 years, Marie; and

4 WHEREAS, Edouard began his distinguished military career in 1939, when he joined the
5 National Guard. He served as a member of a gun battery and attained the rank of Corporal. In
6 1941, the National Guard was federalized and Edouard was now a member of the United States
7 Army, but he had loftier goals; and

8 WHEREAS, Edouard applied for and was accepted into the United States Army Air
9 Force Cadet Program for pilot training. After rigorous and arduous testing, he became not only a
10 Cadet, but, because of his prior military experience and superb military record, was chosen to be
11 a Cadet Officer; and

12 WHEREAS, Edouard was stationed at various training camps stateside and accrued
13 seventy-five hours of flying time. At that time, the United States Army Air Force was in
14 desperate need of Bombardiers and Navigators for heavy bombers. Edouard trained for service
15 with heavy bombers, and on April 1, 1944, he received his silver wings and became a Second
16 Lieutenant in the United States Army Air Force. He also married his sweetheart, Marie, in
17 Lincoln, Nebraska, at his military base; and

18 WHEREAS, Edouard was assigned to a B-24 Liberator crew for advanced training in
19 Boise, Idaho, and then was shipped out to England to be a member of the Eighth Air Force, 2nd

1 Air division, 96th Combat Bomb Wing, 458th Bomb Group, 752nd Squadron, and 755th Squadron.
2 Edouard was about to face air combat over Nazi Germany in some of the toughest fighting in
3 World War II, facing deadly flak from German anti-aircraft cannon batteries and the ferocious
4 fighting ability of the German Messerschmitt fighter planes. Bomber Squadrons had one of the
5 lowest survival rates in World War II and to this day admiring citizens are amazed at the
6 incredible skill and heroism those young American men faced in their perilous missions over
7 enemy territory; and

8 WHEREAS, Edouard flew thirty missions over Europe in World War II, most over Nazi
9 Germany, at a time when the average survival rate for a bomber crew was fifteen missions.
10 Edouard flew eighteen bomber missions as lead Bombadier, the man upon whose shoulders the
11 success or failure of each mission depended. Some of the missions Edouard served on included
12 Cologne, Metz, Aachen, Magdeburg, Hannover, and the most dangerous target of all, Berlin, the
13 capital of Nazi Germany. Edouard's last mission was to Bad Reichenhall in Bavaria, Germany, a
14 town near Hitler's Mountain retreat at Berchtesgarden. It was the last mission of World War II
15 flown by the United States Army 8th Air Force; and

16 WHEREAS, Because of the skill, teamwork, courage, and luck of Edouard and his crew,
17 they never lost a plane or man on any of their perilous missions, a remarkable record given the
18 extremely high casualty rates suffered by allied bomber crews in the European Theatre during
19 World War II; and

20 WHEREAS, As a testimony to Edouard's heroic service to our nation during World War
21 II, he received a Certificate of Valor, four Oak Leaf Clusters between November 11, 1944, and
22 May 2, 1945, and the medal of which he is most proud, the Distinguished Flying Cross, for
23 leading his squadron on a frightfully dangerous bombing mission over Leipham, Germany, on
24 March 9, 1945, for which his crew received a Lead Crew Commendation from General Walter R.
25 Peck, Commander of the 96th Combat Wing of the United States Army; and

26 WHEREAS, After the war, Edouard remained in the United States Army Reserves and
27 was promoted to Captain. Citizen Edouard J. Jacques devoted his life to his family, his three sons,
28 Richard, Edward, and David, his professional career, and serving his community. After thirty-
29 nine years of exemplary service, Edouard retired from the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company
30 as one of its leaders in sales; and

31 WHEREAS, Edouard served the community of Coventry in many capacities. In 1968, he
32 ran for Town Council and received the highest plurality of all candidates in the history of
33 Coventry elections up to that time. He eventually became Town Council President. Edouard
34 continued to represent the needs of the citizens of Coventry by serving on many boards and

1 commissions, the latest of which is the Coventry Housing Authority, of which he was Chairman
2 for several years; and

3 WHEREAS, On February 6, 2013, which is Edouard J. Jacques 92nd birthday, Edouard
4 will be awarded the Rhode Island Star by Adjutant General Kevin McBride at the National Guard
5 headquarters in Cranston, for his heroic military service to our nation at a moment of its greatest
6 need, during the Second World War; now, therefore be it

7 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
8 hereby congratulates Edouard J. Jacques for receiving the Rhode Island Star in recognition of his
9 valorous service to our nation during World War II. We wish him a most happy and joyous 92nd
10 birthday, as well; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
12 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Mr. Edouard J. Jacques.

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