

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION HONORING THOSE WHO HAVE ASSISTED KOREAN WAR VETERANS

2016 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Jani Iwamoto

House Sponsor: Carol Spackman Moss

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This concurrent resolution of the Legislature and the Governor honors efforts to help Utah Korean War veterans receive the "Ambassador for Peace Medal."

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- ▶ honors the efforts of retired Marine Corps sergeants John Cole and Jay Wells to help Utah Korean War veterans receive the "Ambassador for Peace Medal"; and
- ▶ expresses gratitude to Utah Korean War veterans for their service and sacrifice.

Special Clauses:

None

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:

WHEREAS, the Korean War is often called "The Forgotten War" or "The Unknown War";

WHEREAS, properly remembering veterans who fought in a conflict often described as "forgotten" is an essential expression of true gratitude;

WHEREAS, efforts are underway to see that all Utah combat veterans of the Korean War are located and recognized for their sacrifice;

WHEREAS, these efforts began in 2012 when John Cole, a retired sergeant in the



28 United States Marine Corps and veteran of both World War II and the Korean War, addressed
29 questions about his service from a young South Korean journalist while attending an event in
30 Washington, D.C., commemorating the 60th anniversary of the end of the Korean War;

31 WHEREAS, other reporters and photographers, who spoke little or no English, listened
32 carefully as Cole shared his story as the first journalist acted as interpreter;

33 WHEREAS, through these exchanges, Cole came to realize the South Korean people
34 are deeply grateful for those who helped save their nation;

35 WHEREAS, Cole related that South Koreans do not see the Korean War as "The
36 Forgotten War" but as the "Remembered War" because they still have a nation;

37 WHEREAS, when Cole returned home, he felt compelled to do more to highlight the
38 service of Utah's Korean War veterans;

39 WHEREAS, Cole worked with Jay Wells, also a retired sergeant in the United States
40 Marine Corps and veteran of the Vietnam War, to brainstorm what to do next;

41 WHEREAS, within a few short weeks, the two men forged connections to those in the
42 business community that do work for the South Korean government, officials at the Consulate
43 General of the Republic of Korea in San Francisco, and even those that talk directly to the
44 President of the Republic of South Korea;

45 WHEREAS, arrangements were made for Utah combat veterans of the Korean War to
46 receive the "Ambassador for Peace Medal" from the Republic of Korea;

47 WHEREAS, the costs for the medals are paid for entirely by the South Korean
48 government;

49 WHEREAS, to receive the medal, a veteran must be from Utah and have served in
50 combat during the Korean War between June 25, 1950, and July 27, 1953;

51 WHEREAS, the Utah Department of Veterans' and Military Affairs assisted with the
52 first medal ceremony, held in the Utah Capitol Rotunda in September 2014, and have
53 continued to assist with seven subsequent ceremonies;

54 WHEREAS, members of the Republic of Korea's government, including Han
55 Dong-Man, consul general of the Republic of Korea, have been present at each ceremony to
56 recognize the assembled veterans and their families;

57 WHEREAS, Dong-Man has stated, "Without the heroism, valor and sacrifice of these
58 Korean War veterans, our country would not have the peace, prosperity and economic growth

59 that we enjoy today";

60 WHEREAS, since 2013, Cole's and Wells's efforts have enabled about 1,000 Utahns to
61 receive the Republic of South Korea's "Ambassador for Peace Medal";

62 WHEREAS, approximately 17,000 Utahns served in the Korean War;

63 WHEREAS, at each ceremony, Cole and Wells learn of more Utah Korean War
64 veterans, and they know there are many more Utah combat veterans of the Korean War yet to
65 be honored; and

66 WHEREAS, Cole has said, "Some people have told us it's a project we'll never finish,
67 but what are we supposed to do? It's a lot of work, tracking all these names down, but we want
68 to get everyone we possibly can":

69 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
70 Governor concurring therein, honors the efforts of retired Marine Corps sergeants John Cole
71 and Jay Wells who have helped Korean War veterans receive the "Ambassador for Peace
72 Medal."

73 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor express gratitude
74 to every Utah combat veteran of the Korean War for their service and sacrifice.

75 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Utah
76 Department of Veterans' and Military Affairs, the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea
77 in San Francisco, the President of the Republic of Korea, John Cole, and Jay Wells.

Legislative Review Note
Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel