

One Hundred Eighth Congress
of the
United States of America

AT THE SECOND SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Tuesday,
the twentieth day of January, two thousand and four*

Joint Resolution

Recognizing the 60th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge during World War II.

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, Belgian, Canadian, and other soldiers, 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, Belgian, Canadian, and other 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, Belgian, Canadian, and other forces in defeating the German attack made possible the defeat of Nazi Germany four 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 Luxembourg has erected over 90 monuments and plaques commemorating the liberation of Luxembourg by United States Armed Forces during World War II;

Whereas the 60th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge in 2004 will be marked by many commemorative events by citizens of the United States, Belgium, Luxembourg, and many other nations;

Whereas the friendship between the United States and both Belgium and Luxembourg is strong today in part because of the Battle of the Bulge; and

Whereas section 204 of the Veterans Benefits Act of 2002 (38 U.S.C. 2409 note) authorized the Secretary of the Army to place in Arlington National Cemetery a memorial marker honoring those who fought in 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) recognizes the 60th anniversary of the battle in the European theater of operations during World War II known as the Battle of the Bulge, which began with a German surprise attack in the Ardennes forest region of Belgium and Luxembourg and ended with an Allied victory that made possible the defeat of Nazi Germany four months later;

(2) honors those who gave their lives during the Battle of the Bulge;

(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) reaffirms the bonds of friendship between the United States and both Belgium and Luxembourg.

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

*Vice President of the United States and
President of the Senate.*