

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 15

BY SENATORS MARIONNEAUX, ADLEY, AMEDEE, BAJOIE, BARHAM, BOASSO, BROOME, CAIN, CASSIDY, CHAISSON, CHEEK, CRAVINS, DUPLESSIS, DUPRE, ELLINGTON, FIELDS, FONTENOT, B. GAUTREAUX, N. GAUTREAUX, HEITMEIER, HINES, HOLLIS, JACKSON, JONES, KOSTELKA, LENTINI, MALONE, MCPHERSON, MICHOT, MOUNT, MURRAY, NEVERS, QUINN, ROMERO, SCHEDLER, SHEPHERD, SMITH, THEUNISSEN AND ULLO

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana to the family of United States Army Staff Sergeant Ronnie Lee Sanders upon his death in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Ronnie Lee Sanders was a native of Shreveport, Louisiana, and a graduate of Woodlawn High School, attending the school from 1996 until the successful completion of his studies in 1999; and

WHEREAS, shortly after finishing high school, Staff Sergeant Sanders began to follow his dream of serving his country by enlisting in the U.S. Army, and ultimately choosing the risky life of a paratrooper in one of the nation's most storied and revered units of elite and highly trained soldiers; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Sanders relentlessly trained himself and constantly challenged himself mentally and physically as a true warrior, accepting nothing less than the best from himself as he completed the Army's arduous Basic Airborne Course at Ft. Benning, Georgia, with distinction; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Sanders' extensive combat skills and leadership abilities were recognized by his superiors, and he was rewarded with an assignment to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the legendary 82nd Airborne Division, based at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Sanders faithfully served his country for seven years as a member of one of the nation's best ground combat forces, and completed two successful combat tours in the Iraqi Theater, bringing great credit upon himself and the tough infantry troops that he led; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Sanders, after his 2004 and 2005 overseas deployments in his country's fight on terrorism, was called upon once more in 2007 to help stabilize a

deteriorating condition in Iraq and shore up a newly elected, democratic government struggling for its own survival; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Sanders was 26 years old when he and his men were engaged in convoy security February 3, 2007, through the dangerous streets of Taji, Iraq, when they were attacked by a large terrorist insurgent force and the vehicle in which they were traveling was struck by enemy fire; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Sanders was mortally wounded during the ensuing attack as he attempted to counter the ambush and marshal his fellow soldiers in a defense of his perilous position; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Sanders' family, including his wife, Rachel, and his mother, Ruth, were stricken by the news of his death and left wondering how his irreplaceable loss would affect his four-month old twin daughters who now faced the harshness of a life without their beloved father; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Sanders had brought great credit upon himself during his military career with two awards of the Bronze Star Medal for his battlefield valor, the Purple Heart Medal for wounds suffered in combat, three awards of the Army Commendation Medal, and the Army Achievement Medal; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Sanders' other decorations included the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Korean Defense Service Medal, the Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon with oak leaf cluster, the coveted Combat Action Badge, the elite Parachutist's Badge, and the Air Assault Badge.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby extend its deepest condolences to the family of United States Army Staff Sergeant Ronnie Lee Sanders for the profound loss his heroic death in battle has left them to bear.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Staff Sergeant Ronnie Lee Sanders.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE