

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 85

BY SENATORS MARIONNEAUX, ADLEY, ALARIO, AMEDEE, BROOME, CASSIDY, CHAISSON, CHEEK, CRAVINS, CROWE, DONAHUE, DORSEY, DUPLESSIS, DUPRE, ERDEY, B. GAUTREAUX, N. GAUTREAUX, GRAY, HEBERT, HEITMEIER, JACKSON, KOSTELKA, LAFLEUR, LONG, MARTINY, MCPHERSON, MICHOT, MORRISH, MOUNT, MURRAY, NEVERS, QUINN, RISER, SHAW, SHEPHERD, SMITH, THOMPSON AND WALSWORTH

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere and heartfelt condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana to the family of United States Army Staff Sergeant Michael Gabel upon his death in Afghanistan.

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Michael Gabel was a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and a graduate of Lee High School where he trained with great discipline and determination to overcome the debilitating asthma he suffered and become a member of the school wrestling team; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Gabel continued his studies after high school, successfully completing the Culinary Arts Institute and overcoming dyslexia to learn to speak and read Arabic and French; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Gabel had always felt a great patriotism, pride and love for his country and in 2000 he decided that he would follow the long military tradition in his family when he enlisted in the United States Army so that he might better serve his homeland; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Gabel excelled in his basic combat training and determined after his successful completion of that training that he would continue to pursue his goal of being part of an elite, fighting unit; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Gabel soon applied for and was accepted to airborne school, where, after some of the toughest military training known, his newly earned jump wings were pinned upon his chest; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Gabel was soon stationed with the legendary 82nd Airborne Division out of Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where he continued to sharpen his warrior skills; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Gabel and his fellow parachutists would be deployed in 2002 to Afghanistan where they would gallantly battle terrorist forces determined to harm America; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Gabel and his unit would return to war-torn southwest Asia in 2003, this time to Iraq, where heavily armed militias, tribal forces, and terrorists from throughout the region posed a constant threat to American and coalition forces attempting to restore order in the troubled state; and

WHEREAS, in 2004, Staff Sergeant Gabel was reassigned to the 173rd Airborne Brigade, another storied elite fighting unit, based in Camp Ederle, Italy, but soon deployed and headed to Afghanistan, where the battle-hardened noncommissioned officer led his men with great distinction and courage and fought with such valor and determination that he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his actions in ground combat against enemy forces; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Gabel would ultimately return to Afghanistan in 2007 for his fourth tour of duty in southwest Asia, and his second tour with the renowned "Sky Soldiers" of the 173rd Airborne Brigade who were launching missions from remote Forward Operating Base Curry; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Gabel was thirty years old when he led a mounted patrol of the 1st Battalion of the 503rd Infantry Regiment on December 12, 2007, near the rugged mountain town of Dandar in eastern Afghanistan where enemy activity and presence was always high; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Gabel was riding in the lead vehicle when he and his men were engaged by enemy forces who used a roadside bomb to strike the patrol and mortally wound the staff sergeant and one of his men; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Gabel's heroic actions resulted in a second award of the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart, posthumously, and a hero's welcome home to Baton Rouge with full military honors and tearful yet proud family and friends who remembered fondly the fallen warrior.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby extend its deepest expression of sorrow and condolences to the family of United States Army Staff Sergeant Michael Gabel for his brave service and extraordinary sacrifice for his country in its Global War on Terror.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Staff Sergeant Michael Gabel.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE