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ORIGINAL

2016 Second Extraordinary Session

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 7

BY SENATORS WARD AND ALLAIN

CONDOLENCES. Expresses sincere condolences upon the passing of Elward J.Stephens of St. Martin Parish.

1	A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
2	To express the sincere and heartfelt condolences of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the
3	death of World War II veteran, Mr. Elward J. Stephens, and to remember his many
4	contributions made on behalf of his community, state, and country.
5	WHEREAS, it is with deep regret that the Legislature of Louisiana has learned of the
6	passing of an extraordinary member of the Greatest Generation; Elward Joseph Stephens
7	passed peacefully from this life on June 2, 2016, at the age of ninety-one, surrounded by
8	loved ones and at peace with his God; and
9	WHEREAS, during his nine decades on this earth, Elward Stephens was a productive
10	citizen who reared a family, built a home, and made a life for himself filled with simple
11	pleasures; however, as a veteran of the Allied Invasion of Italy, Mr. Stephens distinguished
12	himself as one of the chosen few willing to stand in harm's way, again and again, in the name
13	of freedom, duty, and honor; and
14	WHEREAS, Mr. Stephens was a nineteen-year-old infantryman in the United States
15	Army who exhibited unmatched bravery and suffered untold hardship from the moment he
16	waded ashore at Anzio Beach in Italy until he reached the border of the Rhineland in
17	Germany, he struggled in near-constant combat conditions for 230 days which equals more
18	than seven months; and

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1 WHEREAS, Elward Stephens was made of "all the right stuff"; he was born on a 2 camp boat in Belle River to Gilbert and Alvinia Chaisson Stephens on August 29, 1924, and 3 was reared through the hard times of the Great Depression; his schooling was cut short when 4 he went to work at a service station in Morgan City at the age of fifteen; and 5 WHEREAS, drafted in 1942, Mr. Stephens was an excellent soldier and marksman and his fluency in the French language made him a vital asset on the front lines; on June 5, 6 7 1944, he marched into Rome with the Allied Forces and thankful to be alive, took time to 8 celebrate mass in a nearby Catholic Church; early the following morning, June 6, 1944, the 9 Normandy Invasion began, and after a brief respite, his combat service continued to Pisa, 10 to Marseilles, France, and onto the borders of Germany; and 11 WHEREAS, after being honorably discharged, Elward Stephens returned to his home 12 in South Louisiana; he continued his education and he began a career in seismography and 13 petroleum exploration in the waters of the Gulf of Mexico; he was employed by Humble Oil, 14 now known as Exxon-Mobil, and later by Shell Oil where he retired after thirty years of 15 service; and 16 WHEREAS, in 1947, at a dance in Morgan City, he met and fell in love with a lovely lass named Olive Boudreaux; they married and reared three sons in a home that Elward built 17 18 himself; and 19 WHEREAS, Elward Stephens was not defined by the horrific circumstance of war; 20 his character was strengthened by the experience; upon his return to Louisiana, the place that he loved; his resolve was to "get on with living," to grow, thrive, make a good life for 21 22 himself, and to be blessed with a family; and WHEREAS, Elward Stephens had that whimsical *joie de vie*, the joy of life; he was 23 24 the kind of individual who grasps all the happiness that he could find, he was a steward of the land he loved, and he was a gracious servant of his God; he never met a stranger and he 25 gave generously of his time and talent to the community; and 26 27 WHEREAS, Mr. Stephens began his military service in the midst of World War II in the United States Army with the Allied Invasion of Italy and encountered some of the 28 most savage fighting in military engagements throughout Europe; and 29 WHEREAS, Mr. Elward Stephens came through the trepidation of warfare to emerge 30

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1	from it a stronger, more determined, human being; his was a charmed life and he lived to
2	celebrate V-E Day, the surrender of Axis Forces in Europe, on the eighth of May each year
3	for seven decades.
4	THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
5	express sincere and heartfelt condolences upon the death of Mr. Elward J. Stephens from the
6	community of Stephenville in St. Martin Parish.
7	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
8	posthumously recognize the military service of Mr. Elward J. Stephens in the United States
9	Army as a veteran of World War II in the European Theater and for his meritorious
10	contributions to the freedom of all citizens of the United States which shall not be forgotten;
11	and that this acknowledgment reflects his unselfish sacrifice to duty, honor, and country.
12	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to his
13	widow, Mrs. Olive B. Stephens.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Susan P. Montague.

	DIGEST	
SCR 7 Original	2016 Second Extraordinary Session	Ward

Expresses condolences upon the death of Mr. Elward J. Stephens of St. Martin Parish.