

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 58

BY SENATORS PERRY, ALARIO, ALLAIN, APPEL, BARROW, BISHOP, BOUDREAUX, BROWN, CARTER, CHABERT, CLAITOR, COLOMB, CORTEZ, DONAHUE, ERDEY, FANNIN, GATTI, HEWITT, JOHNS, LAFLEUR, LAMBERT, LONG, LUNEAU, MARTINY, MILKOVICH, MILLS, MIZELL, MORRELL, MORRISH, PEACOCK, PETERSON, RISER, GARY SMITH, JOHN SMITH, TARVER, THOMPSON, WALSWORTH, WARD AND WHITE

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana to the family of Louisiana Army National Guard Staff Sergeant Aaron Rutledge upon his death in the service of his country.

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Aaron Rutledge was a native of Houston, Texas, and a resident of Pineville, Louisiana, where he served as a recruiter for the Louisiana Army National Guard in Natchitoches; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Rutledge enlisted in the Louisiana Army National Guard in 2004 and trained hard during his basic combat training and advanced training, welcoming the challenges that military service required; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Rutledge excelled in his dedication and dependability to his duties, and his commanders and superiors recognized his outstanding service by promoting him to the leadership role as Staff Sergeant; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Rutledge and his unit were mobilized and deployed in 2011 in support of Operation New Dawn as Operation Iraqi Freedom came to an end and the transition to Iraqi control of its military forces began; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Rutledge began working as a combat medic as his unit found and engaged enemy forces determined to reverse the stability and cohesion that departing U.S. forces had accomplished; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Rutledge and his men soon found themselves in the middle of increased fighting and growing casualties as enemy attacks rose, and the horror, shock, and graphic nature of those casualties strongly affected him; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Rutledge was rotated out of the theater of combat when he and his men completed their tour of duty and returned home, but what they had witnessed remained with them; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Rutledge and his unit were deployed once more, this time to Afghanistan and Operation Enduring Freedom in 2013, where terrorist forces had regrouped and began major offensives to end American presence in the region; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Rutledge, serving as a combat medic, once again was forced to confront terrible wounds and suffering on the battlefield, and those troubling memories lingered with him as he headed for home; and

WHEREAS, sadly, on April 2, 2015, Staff Sergeant Rutledge suffered an untimely death at the age of twenty-seven, leaving behind his wife Alex and son Ezra Lee; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Rutledge's awards and decorations include the Army Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Army Achievement Medal, the Army Good Conduct Medal, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Bronze Campaign Star, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Armed Forces Reserve Medal with Bronze Hour Glass and Mobilization Device, the Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon, the NATO Medal, the Louisiana War Cross, 2nd Award, the Louisiana Emergency Service Medal, 2nd Award, Louisiana General Excellence Ribbon, 2nd Award, the Louisiana Longevity Ribbon, 2nd Award, the Combat Action Badge and the Army National Guard Recruiter Badge.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby extend its deepest and most profound condolences to the family of Louisiana Army National Guard Staff Sergeant Rutledge in their sorrow, mourning and loss, and recognize his faithful service, sacrifice and valor in combat while in uniform.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Louisiana Army National Guard Staff Sergeant Aaron Rutledge.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE