

1-1 By: Dean (Senate Sponsor - Campbell) H.C.R. No. 122
1-2 (In the Senate - Received from the House May 10, 2017;
1-3 May 10, 2017, read first time and referred to Committee on Veteran
1-4 Affairs & Border Security; May 15, 2017, reported favorably by the
1-5 following vote: Yeas 6, Nays 0; May 15, 2017, sent to printer.)

1-6 COMMITTEE VOTE

	Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-7				
1-8	Campbell	X		
1-9	Huffines	X		
1-10	Buckingham	X		
1-11	Hall	X		
1-12	Lucio	X		
1-13	Rodríguez		X	
1-14	Uresti	X		

1-15 HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1-16 WHEREAS, The Texas Legislative Medal of Honor was established
1-17 to recognize gallant and intrepid service by a member of the state
1-18 or federal military forces, and U.S. Army Master Sergeant Travis E.
1-19 Watkins proved himself a deserving recipient of this prestigious
1-20 award for his heroism during the Korean War; and

1-21 WHEREAS, Born in Waldo, Arkansas, Travis Watkins grew up in
1-22 Troup, Texas; answering his nation's call to duty, he enlisted in
1-23 the U.S. Army in 1939, and he served with distinction in the Pacific
1-24 theater during World War II, earning the Bronze Star for his actions
1-25 at Guadalcanal; after the war, he was honorably discharged, and in
1-26 1948, he married Madie Sue Barnett; the couple became the parents of
1-27 two daughters; and

1-28 WHEREAS, During the Korean War, Master Sergeant Watkins
1-29 reenlisted, and he was deployed to Korea with Company H, Ninth
1-30 Infantry Regiment, Second Infantry Division; on August 31, 1950,
1-31 the company was stationed near Yongsan when an overwhelming North
1-32 Korean force broke through the United Nations lines, and Sergeant
1-33 Watkins and 30 other men found themselves under siege and cut off
1-34 from the rest of their unit; and

1-35 WHEREAS, Over the next three days, Sergeant Watkins displayed
1-36 both remarkable leadership and extraordinary bravery; he took
1-37 command, established perimeter defenses to repel the constant enemy
1-38 assaults, and continually exposed himself to enemy fire by moving
1-39 from foxhole to foxhole to give instructions and encouragement to
1-40 his fellow soldiers; and

1-41 WHEREAS, When the unit's ammunition began to run out,
1-42 Sergeant Watkins shot two North Korean soldiers 50 yards beyond the
1-43 perimeter and went out alone to retrieve their weapons and
1-44 ammunition; he was wounded while doing so, but still managed to fell
1-45 all three of his enemy attackers; he collected their weapons and
1-46 ammunition as well and made it back to his astonished men; and

1-47 WHEREAS, Later, six of the enemy began to lob grenades into
1-48 the American perimeter, endangering the position; Sergeant Watkins
1-49 stood up from his foxhole and fired his rifle at the attackers; he
1-50 was immediately struck by machine gun fire, but he continued
1-51 shooting until he had killed all six North Koreans; he then
1-52 collapsed, paralyzed from the waist down; and

1-53 WHEREAS, Despite his grave injuries, Sergeant Watkins
1-54 continued to encourage his men, refusing to accept any food from
1-55 their dwindling supply; when it became clear that help would not
1-56 arrive in time, he ordered his men to withdraw, and he further
1-57 refused to let them take him with them, since his inability to walk
1-58 would only slow their retreat; in the last moments of his life, he
1-59 wished his comrades luck and remained at his post until the end; he
1-60 died two days before his 30th birthday; and

1-61 WHEREAS, Sergeant Watkins's leadership throughout this

2-1 ordeal helped to keep his men alive and enabled his troops to mount
2-2 a strong defense that killed approximately 500 enemy soldiers; in
2-3 recognition of his monumental courage, President Harry S. Truman
2-4 posthumously awarded him the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest
2-5 military award; the medal was presented to his wife in a ceremony in
2-6 Washington, D.C., on January 9, 1951; and

2-7 WHEREAS, In the years since, Sergeant Watkins has been
2-8 further honored in the state he called home; a housing complex at
2-9 Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio was named in his memory in 1961, and
2-10 the Watkins-Logan State Veterans Home in Tyler was also named in his
2-11 honor in 2011; in 2000 a supply ship, the USNS *Watkins*, was
2-12 christened in his name; his remains are interred at Gladewater
2-13 Memorial Park in Gladewater; and

2-14 WHEREAS, During a desperate situation in a time of war,
2-15 Master Sergeant Travis Watkins took command, bolstered the spirits
2-16 of his men, and repeatedly risked his life in their behalf, making
2-17 the ultimate sacrifice in order that they might survive; for this
2-18 selfless act of heroism, it is indeed appropriate that he be honored
2-19 with this state's supreme military commendation; now, therefore, be
2-20 it

2-21 RESOLVED, That the 85th Legislature of the State of Texas
2-22 hereby direct the governor of the State of Texas to posthumously
2-23 award the Texas Legislative Medal of Honor to Travis E. Watkins in
2-24 recognition of his valiant service during the Korean War.

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