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HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING FULL PRESERVATION OF UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS AIR STATION EWA AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT, MUSEUM, AND RESTORED PARK FOR THE STATE OF HAWAII.

WHEREAS, as international tensions intensified and military conflicts broke out in Europe and Asia prior to America's entry into World War II, Japan resented what it perceived to be United States interference in the affairs of the Far East; and

WHEREAS, Japan decided to destroy the United States Pacific Fleet based in Pearl Harbor and all Army, Navy, and Marine air forces on Oahu to ensure that the United States could not hinder Japan's plans for conquest in Asia and the Pacific; and

WHEREAS, in order to attain this objective, Japan sent a powerful naval force of six aircraft carriers and supporting ships across the Pacific Ocean to attack American forces based on the island of Oahu; and

WHEREAS, in the early stages of that attack, at approximately 7:53 a.m. on the morning of December 7, 1941, Lieutenant Kiyokuma Okajima led nine Mitsubishi Type 0 (Zero) carrier fighters from the aircraft carrier Hiryu toward the Ewa Mooring Mast Field (later re-designated Marine Corps Air Station Ewa) on the island of Oahu, and coming from the north, the fighters flew as low as 20 feet over the unsuspecting Marine Corps airfield, and in subsequent firing passes, destroyed many of the 49 aircraft there, damaging buildings and equipment; and

WHEREAS, within minutes, fighters from the aircraft carriers Akagi, Kaga, and Soryu arrived over the Ewa Mooring Mast Field and caused further destruction at the base; and

WHEREAS, the attack on Ewa Mooring Mast Field was so precise and well-executed that it appeared as though the Japanese fighters had previously selected their particular

targets with the purpose of riddling them, and setting fire to the gas tanks so as to render them useless for pursuit and interception; and

WHEREAS, the Ewa Mooring Mast Field lay along the departure route for many Japanese aircraft flying toward their rendezvous point northwest of Kaena Point, those aircraft subjected the field to additional strafing attacks and completed the destruction of 33 aircraft and the damage to 16 others of the 49 present; and

WHEREAS, within minutes, the Marines mounted a gallant defense of their base, while the remainder of the Japanese strike force attacked Pearl Harbor and other airfields on Oahu; and

WHEREAS, the bravery of the United States Marines at Ewa showed itself in full force that morning, with the men fighting gallantly in the face of a ruthless and determined enemy who carried out their mission of neutralizing any American aircraft that could intercept and counterattack the Japanese invaders; and

WHEREAS, in one example of courage, Private William G. Turner, who died of his wounds and received a posthumous Bronze Star, assisted Master Technical Sergeant Emil S. Peters who jumped into the rear cockpit of a SBD-2 dive bomber, with Peters firing from the cockpit as Turner fed ammunition; and

WHEREAS, the Japanese aircraft also inflicted other casualties among the Marines at the Ewa Mooring Mast Field, killing three men and wounding 13 others; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Carlo A. Micheletto, Private First Class Edward S. Laurence, and Private William G. Turner, gave their lives in defense of their country, and two civilian residents of Ewa, Yaeko Lillian Oda and Francisco Tacderan, also lost their lives as a result of the attack; and

WHEREAS, Japanese Lieutenant Yoshio Shiga, leader of the first wave fighter unit from the aircraft carrier Kaga, while strafing the parked planes at Ewa Field with his 7.7 mm machine guns, recorded for posterity the account of a lone Marine, who stood amidst the gunfire striking the ground around him and

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bravely emptied his sidearm at the aircraft attacking overhead, a man in whom Lieutenant Shiga found the "spirit of dogged tenacity that was the very embodiment of bravery and valor" that he did not expect from an American, and commented that this Marine was the bravest soldier he ever encountered; and

WHEREAS, two Army Air Force fighter pilots from Wheeler Field, Second Lieutenants Kenneth M. Taylor and George S. Welch, engaged Japanese dive bombers in the vicinity of the Ewa Mooring Mast Field in one of the most famous dogfights of the war; and

WHEREAS, the Ewa Mooring Mast Field constitutes one of the very first points of the attack against the United States which precipitated our nation's entry into World War II; and

WHEREAS, during 1941, the Marine Corps developed the Ewa Mooring Mast Field which later, as Marine Corps Air Station Ewa, served through World War II; and

WHEREAS, the Marine Corps Air Station Ewa was officially closed on June 18, 1952, and its property assumed by Naval Air Station Barbers Point; and

WHEREAS, the designation and development of Ewa Field as a National Monument, Museum, and Restored Park would preserve this critical American historic site, allowing stories to be told of the associated military conflicts, American sacrifices, and the heroism and determination that became the foundation for victory in the Pacific arena and eventually in World War II itself; and

WHEREAS, a National Monument at the former Marine Corps Air Station Ewa would further preserve documentation of Hawaii's involvement in World War II, serving as a focal point for the observation, remembrance, and expression of American patriotism, honoring those who served within its gates; and

WHEREAS, the preservation of Marine Corps Air Station Ewa as a National Monument would create opportunities for employment, education, and community pride for the people of Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, to designate Ewa Field as a National Monument, Museum, and Restored Park it is necessary to identify an appropriate boundary for nomination to the Hawaii State and

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National Registers of Historic Places by conducting a battlefield survey and historic research, and making an inventory of contributing and noncontributing historic features; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2009, the Senate concurring, that the President of the United States, the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of the Interior, and United States Navy are respectfully urged to preserve Marine Corps Air Station Ewa, or a portion of it, as a National Monument; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Navy and its private, public and non-profit partners are respectfully requested to proceed with the research, battlefield analysis, and other activities necessary to designate an appropriate boundary for nomination of Ewa Field to the Hawaii State and National Registers of Historic Places; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Land and Natural Resources submit a report no later than 20 days before the convening of the 2010 Regular Session on the research, battlefield analysis, and other activities necessary to designate an appropriate boundary for nomination of Ewa Field to the Hawaii State and National Registers of Historic Places; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of the Interior, Commander of Navy Region Hawaii, and to each member of Hawaii's Congressional delegation.