



HR0545

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to honor the life of retired United States
4 Air Force Colonel George "Bud" Day, a Medal of Honor recipient,
5 a prisoner of war in Vietnam, and one of the nation's most
6 highly decorated servicemen, who passed away at the age of 88
7 on July 27, 2013, ending a remarkable life of service to
8 American freedom; and

9 WHEREAS, George Day was born on February 24, 1925 in Sioux
10 City, Iowa; he joined the United States Marine Corps in 1942
11 while still attending high school; he served in the Pacific
12 Theater during World War II before returning home, graduating
13 from law school and passing the Bar Exam in South Dakota in
14 1949; and

15 WHEREAS, George Day entered the Iowa National Guard in
16 1950, where he attended flight school; he was called to active
17 duty by the United States Air Force the following year and
18 served 2 tours as a bomber pilot during the Korean War; and

19 WHEREAS, While serving as an Air Force pilot in Vietnam,
20 George Day was shot down on August 26, 1967 and held captive
21 with his cellmate, future Arizona Senator John McCain, at the
22 infamous Hanoi Hilton; he was often the highest-ranking captive

1 and endured years of beatings, starvation, and torture; and

2 WHEREAS, On March 14, 1973, George Day was released and
3 reunited with his wife and 4 children after being held captive
4 for 5 years and 7 months; and

5 WHEREAS, On March 4, 1976, President Gerald Ford awarded
6 George Day the Medal of Honor for his personal bravery while a
7 captive in North Vietnam; and

8 WHEREAS, Upon George Day's retirement from active duty in
9 1977, he went on to practice law in Florida and became a
10 crusader for veterans' health care benefits; in 2003, he
11 brought a class action lawsuit before the United States Supreme
12 Court which alleged that the government reneged on its promise
13 to provide free lifetime health care to hundreds of thousands
14 of Korean and World War II veterans; the case prompted Congress
15 to pass legislation in 2000 expanding the military's TRICARE
16 health insurance program to include veterans over the age of
17 65; and

18 WHEREAS, In 1989, George Day wrote about his experiences of
19 being a prisoner of war in his autobiography "Return With
20 Honor"; and

21 WHEREAS, George Day was the recipient of over 70 medals

1 during his service in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam; he was
2 the only person to receive the Medal of Honor and the Air Force
3 Cross and was the nation's most highly decorated serviceman
4 since General Douglas MacArthur; and

5 WHEREAS, George Day went on to be active in his friend
6 Senator John McCain's political life, assisting him in both his
7 2000 and 2008 presidential bids; and

8 WHEREAS, Senator McCain referred to George Day as the
9 "bravest of the brave" and as a "leader and inspiration"; the
10 pair remained close friends until his passing; and

11 WHEREAS, George Day's service and patriotism will forever
12 be remembered by the country he loved and served and his legacy
13 will live on forever; therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
15 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
16 we honor the life and legacy of Colonel George "Bud" Day,
17 acknowledge the passing of this great patriot, and extend our
18 deepest sympathy and condolences to his wife, children,
19 grandchildren, and loved ones; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
21 presented to the family of Colonel George "Bud" Day as an

1 expression of our sincere sympathy and gratitude to a man who
2 dedicated his life to the service of his country.