



HR0935

LRB099 17636 MST 42714 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the
4 death of Private First Class Florentino John Santana in Vietnam
5 on September 18, 1966; and

6 WHEREAS, During the summer of 1966, the North Vietnamese
7 Army's (NVA) 324B Division had infiltrated south of the
8 Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) with the clear intention of setting up
9 a major presence in northern Quang Tri Province; the NVA 341st
10 Division was positioned within and north of the DMZ and
11 prepared to support the 324B Division and/or exploit
12 opportunities arising from the 324B's operations; and

13 WHEREAS, The Commanding General of the Third Marine
14 Amphibious Force, the senior United States commander in
15 northern South Vietnam, initiated Operation HASTINGS aimed at
16 discouraging the 324B Division and forcing it back into the DMZ
17 (at the time, U.S. forces could not enter into the DMZ - it was
18 an NVA sanctuary); heavy fighting continued through July of
19 1966, particularly around the "Rockpile" between Khe Sanh and
20 Camp Carroll. HASTINGS ended, and a series of recon-in-force
21 operations - termed Operation PRAIRIE - began on August 3,
22 1966; and

1 WHEREAS, Operation DECKHOUSE IV was conducted by the 7th
2 Fleet's Special Landing Force Bravo (Battalion Landing Team
3 1/26) as an adjunct to Operation PRAIRIE; BLT 1/26's area was
4 about 8 miles northeast of Dong Ha, and the operation began
5 with an amphibious landing and a heliborne landing some six
6 miles inland west of Highway 1; at about 1:30pm on September
7 15, 1966, a reconnaissance team made contact with an NVA
8 company; that contact was the first in what became 10 days of
9 heavy fighting for BLT 1/26's Marines and sailors; although
10 DECKHOUSE IV officially ended on the 18th, BLT 1/26 stayed in
11 support of PRAIRIE until the 25th; the operation claimed at
12 least 200 NVA killed at a cost of 37 Marines and sailors killed
13 in action and another 167 wounded; Pfc. Santana was among those
14 killed in action; and

15 WHEREAS, Pfc. Santana was born in Mission Hidalgo County,
16 Texas on June 20, 1947 to Mr. and Mrs. Baldemar Santana; he had
17 2 sisters, Mary and Alma; he attended Elgin High School and
18 joined the United States Marines in August of 1965; he and his
19 wife, Donna Lou Dewis, had one daughter, Pauline Katherine;
20 therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
22 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
23 commemorate the 50th anniversary of the death of Private First
24 Class Florentino John Santana in Vietnam on September 18, 1966;

1 and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
3 presented to the family of Pfc. Santana as an expression of our
4 esteem and respect.