

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 99-4608, by Representatives D. Schmidt, Sullivan, Benson, Talcott, Hatfield, G. Chandler, Lovick, Campbell, Lisk, Ballasiotes, McMorris, Wensman, Stensen, Wood, Regala, Veloria, Radcliff, Huff, Barlean, Ogden, Conway, B. Chandler, Dickerson, Linville, Dunn, Carlson, Cooper, Thomas, Pflug, Skinner, Hankins, McDonald, Fortunato, Doumit, Esser, Bush, Kagi and Scott

WHEREAS, Over eight thousand men and women of the Washington National Guard, consisting of the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard, continue to serve the country as a key part of our national defense; and

WHEREAS, These citizen soldiers and airmen sacrifice their time, comfort, and energies to protect and preserve the lives and property of their fellow citizens, and in doing so, these dedicated people demonstrate the vitality of the great tradition of sacrifice and service to State and Nation that characterize the Washington National Guard; and

WHEREAS, Four members of the Washington National Guard 141st Air Refueling Wing at the Fairchild Air Force Base near Spokane, Washington, gave the ultimate sacrifice on January 13, 1999, when their plane, a KC-135E Stratotanker, returning from a reconnaissance plane refueling mission, crashed in Germany:

Major David W. Fite, 41, of Bellevue, Washington, pilot of the KC-135E aerial tanker; a graduate of the Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs, Colorado; a gulf war veteran who spent 11 years in the Air Force and Reserves; and a husband to Kay;

Major Matthew F. Laiho, 40, of Spokane, Washington, the navigator of the KC-135E aerial tanker; a gulf war veteran who served in the Air Force for seven years before joining the National Guard in May 1989; and a husband to Valerie and a father to two children, Erik and Evan;

Captain Kenneth F. Theile, 31, of Spokane, Washington, co-pilot of the KC-135E aerial tanker, a graduate of the Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs, Colorado, who joined the Washington National Guard in September 1998, after serving nine years in the Air Force; and a husband to Michelle; and

Tech. Sgt. Richard G. Visintainer, 48, of Spokane, Washington, a civilian truck driver who joined the Air National Guard in 1972 after serving in the Air Force for four years, and a father to two children, Bridget and Richard;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize and honor the four men of the Washington National Guard who died tragically while serving their country; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Co-Chief Clerks of the House of Representatives to the Honorable William J. Clinton, President of the United States; the Honorable Gary Locke, Governor of the State of Washington; the Adjunct General of the Washington National Guard; and the families of these four brave men.

I hereby certify this to be a true and correct copy of  
Resolution adopted by the House of Representatives  
January 27, 1999.

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Timothy A. Martin, Co-Chief Clerk

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Dean R. Foster, Co-Chief Clerk