

A JOINT RESOLUTION designating Kentucky Route 505 in Ohio County in honor and memory of Jewell Creston Embry.

WHEREAS, Jewell Creston Embry was born in Baizetown, Kentucky, in January of 1920 to Rev. Marian Embry and Lola Albin Embry; and

WHEREAS, at the age of 16, Jewell Creston Embry walked 50 miles to enlist in the United States Navy; and

WHEREAS, following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Jewell Creston Embry was a machinist mate on the USS Grenadier (SS-210) submarine and was involved in numerous battles in the Pacific, including the Battle of Midway; and

WHEREAS, on March 20, 1943, Jewell Creston Embry and his crewmates departed Australia for war patrol headed to the Straits of Malucca. On April 30, 1943, the USS Grenadier engaged two merchant ships while running on the surface. During the attack, the USS Grenadier was spotted by Japanese planes and was forced into an emergency dive; and

WHEREAS, as the USS Grenadier passed the 130 feet depth, the vessel was rocked by an explosion and settled to the bottom at 270 feet. Jewell Creston Embry and the crew fought fires and brought them under control, but the drive shaft had been damaged and proved fatal to the ship; and

WHEREAS, Jewell Creston Embry and crew were able to get the submarine to surface, after 13 hours on the bottom. Commander John Allen Fitzgerald created a makeshift sail in an attempt to bring the Grenadier to shore, but this proved futile; and

WHEREAS, as dawn broke on 22 April, Grenadier's weary crew sighted two Japanese ships heading for them. The skipper "didn't think it advisable to make a stationary dive in 280 feet of water without power," and the crew began burning confidential documents prior to abandoning ship. A Japanese plane attacked the stricken submarine, but Grenadier, though dead in the water and to all appearances helpless, blazed away with her machine guns. The Grenadier hit the plane on its second pass. As

the damaged plane veered off, its torpedo landed about 200 yards from the boat and exploded. As the USS Grenadier drifted beyond its crush depth, Commander Fitzgerald ordered the vessel to be scuttled; and

WHEREAS, Jewell Creston Embry and the rest of the crew dove into the water and Embry recalled the Japanese ships emptied their guns over them as they pulled into the survivors; and

WHEREAS, Jewell Creston Embry and the rest of the crew were taken aboard and shipped to Penang, Malaysia where they were held in a convent school and where they were starved and tortured. While in captivity in the school Embry and the Grenadier crew carved their names into the school walls, which have been preserved as a memorial to their suffering and bravery; and

WHEREAS, the crew was then transferred to camps in Japan. Commander Fitzgerald was sent to Ofuna camp in Tokyo, which was the setting for the movie "Unbroken," which tells the story of torture and deprivation POW's were forced to endure. Jewell Creston Embry and much of the crew were sent to Kokora POW camp near Nagasaki. Their story was told in the movie "No Ordinary Joes." The story consisted of routine torture, starvation rations, and slave labor; and

WHEREAS, Jewell Creston Embry was beaten with bats, burnt with cigarettes, and strung up by his arms. The guards would burst into the sleeping area at night to create sleep deprivation. Embry was given one small cup of rice and an orange a week for rations. This resulted in drastic weight loss and the development of beriberi resulting in heart damage that eventually contributed to his death; and

WHEREAS, Jewell Creston Embry was forced to perform slave labor in the local steel mill, which in the waning days of the war was bombed by Allied planes, an event which may have saved his life. Several days after the bombing, the mill was still burning when on August 9, 1945 the Bockscar B-29 flew overhead with the second atomic bomb which had been destined for Kokura. Low clouds and smoke from the burning factory

obscured the vision of the B-29 bomber. After several overhead runs, the plane was rerouted to Nagasaki, where it dropped Big Boy, the second atomic bomb destroying much of the city; and

WHEREAS, several days later the Japanese agreed to an unconditional surrender and the crew awoke to find that most of their guards had gone home. Within days, the United States Air Force dropped food and supplies into the camp, a scene repeated in the movie "Empire of the Sun"; and

WHEREAS, later that month General Douglas MacArthur established the initial occupation centers on Honshu Island where Kokura was located. Jewell Creston Embry and fellow Kentuckian Ralph Adkins walked and hitchhiked through conquered Japan to become two of the first prisoners of war to be liberated; and

WHEREAS, following World War II, Jewell Creston Embry continued to serve in the Navy until his retirement. However, heart disease he developed during his imprisonment contributed to his death in 1992; and

WHEREAS, Jewell Creston Embry was awarded a Purple Heart for his wartime injuries; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly sees fit to honor the life and bravery of Jewell Creston Embry by designating a Commonwealth highway in his honor;

NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

➔Section 1. The Transportation Cabinet shall designate Kentucky Route 505 in Ohio County as the "Jewell Creston Embry Memorial Highway WWII POW" and shall, within 30 days of the effective date of this Resolution, erect the appropriate signage.