

1 A RESOLUTION honoring Phillip Coffey and his poem "Foot Soldier," and
2 acknowledging the courageous service of Elroy Coffey during World War II.

3 WHEREAS, it is appropriate that this body, and all citizens of this great
4 Commonwealth, take time to duly acknowledge the many sacrifices of the Greatest
5 Generation and of the family members who were waiting for those brave soldiers when
6 they returned home from the war; and

7 WHEREAS, Elroy Coffey, a native of the Keltner community in Adair County, is
8 one such soldier, and on this day his many sacrifices during combat in World War II are
9 rightfully commended, as are those of his cherished wife, Venie, and his four loving
10 children, Roy, Margaret, Deborah, and Phillip; and

11 WHEREAS, in recognition of his father's service, Phillip Coffey wrote a poem
12 entitled "Foot Soldier" to not only acknowledge his father but as a tribute to all
13 infantrymen who are tasked with fighting on the front lines of battle; and

14 WHEREAS, Phillip Coffey's poem reads, "He seemed but a eunuch among the
15 stately studs/But first in line when his nation needed much/From generations of simple
16 men, a hero was born./Generations of kinfolk had taught him about honor and such./They
17 handed him a rifle to fight the war/The tasteless M.R.E.'s upon the march/Not sustaining
18 his youthful soul/From horrors of fear, death and gore./The heroic foot soldier arrived on
19 the peaceful shore/No marching bands with accolades of gratitude/New horizons he must
20 now explore/For humanity he had paid the unscripted dues./No Nazi or imperialist could
21 stop this common man/ALL HAIL THE FOOT SOLDIER who paid that awful
22 price/Who forever sing in unison with the angel band/No marching forward or foreign foe
23 must he entice"; and

24 WHEREAS, Elroy Coffey was one of eleven children. He enlisted in the United
25 States Army in 1942 and served in the 9th Army, 102nd Infantry Division, and completed
26 basic training at Camp Maxey near Paris, Texas. After his first combat action he would
27 see continuous combat until V-E Day, and he and his division were responsible for the

1 dangerous crossing of the Rohr River, the capturing of 86 towns between the Rohr and
2 Rhine Rivers, and capturing more than 145,000 prisoners of war during combat; and

3 WHEREAS, Elroy Coffey returned to Adair County after the war and worked as a
4 farmer, but the costs of the war were great; and

5 WHEREAS, Elroy Coffey passed from this life on June 30, 2001, and his legacy as
6 a husband, father, and patriot of the first order will not be forgotten; and

7 WHEREAS, Elroy Coffey was just one of many infantrymen—foot soldiers—who
8 suffered psychologically due to the horrors of war, and it is vital that the citizens of this
9 Commonwealth pause on this day to reflect on the monumental courage exhibited by
10 these brave men during the Allied victory of World War II, and also to commend the
11 many sacrifices made by their families when their loves ones returned home;

12 NOW, THEREFORE,

13 *Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of*
14 *Kentucky:*

15 ➔Section 1. The members of the Senate hereby honor Phillip Coffey and his
16 poem "Foot Soldier," and posthumously commend his father, Elroy Coffey, for his
17 extraordinary service as an infantryman during World War II.

18 ➔Section 2. The members of the Senate acknowledge all those foot soldiers, both
19 past and present, who made the ultimate sacrifice during this country's military
20 operations.

21 ➔Section 3. When the Senate adjourns this day, it does so in honor of Elroy
22 Coffey.

23 ➔Section 4. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this
24 Resolution to Senator David P. Givens for delivery.