

1 A RESOLUTION recognizing and honoring the children of military families on
2 Military Kids Day, February 19, 2026.

3 WHEREAS, Military Kids Day is an annual recognition and celebration of the
4 children of military families at the Capitol. This February 19th marks the ninth
5 anniversary of the event since its inception by Senator Jimmy Higdon on February 24,
6 2017; and

7 WHEREAS, Senator Jimmy Higdon, a former chair of the Veterans, Military
8 Affairs, and Public Protection Committee, was approached by Molly Mattingly of
9 Bardstown, Kentucky, whose husband, Colonel Steve Mattingly, served in the 138th
10 Field Artillery unit of the Kentucky National Guard. She said it would be a good idea to
11 honor military kids for the sacrifices they make. Senator Jimmy Higdon took that
12 suggestion to heart and created a day of recognition to honor children of military families
13 at the Capitol as a way of highlighting the unique position children of military families
14 have while navigating day-to-day life; and

15 WHEREAS, Military Kids Day is a day that brings together military families from
16 across the Commonwealth for a day of educational activities, recognition, and
17 engagement with state leaders. This event honors the children and grandchildren of those
18 who serve and have served in the Armed Forces of the United States, offering them a
19 unique opportunity to explore Kentucky's Capitol, connect with legislators, and learn
20 about military and civic service; and

21 WHEREAS, Donna Holiday, Clerk of the Senate, says, "this program not only
22 involves students, but engages their families. School districts, including Fort Knox
23 Schools, have incorporated participation into their fourth-grade curriculum as part of
24 students' study of Kentucky and its government. This program is having a huge positive
25 impact, and that's a legacy worth celebrating"; and

26 WHEREAS, Senator Jimmy Higdon puts his heart and soul into the event, which
27 has grown from 20-40 attendees in 2017 to approximately 250 participants in 2025.

1 Without his leadership, this program would not have grown to receive national
2 recognition and serve as a model for improving civic engagement in other states; and

3 WHEREAS, Major General Hal Lamberton, the Adjutant General of Kentucky,
4 states, "We are deeply grateful for Senator Higdon's leadership and commitment to
5 military families. His vision has created a meaningful opportunity for children across
6 Kentucky to connect, learn, and be celebrated"; and

7 WHEREAS, although 2026 marks the final year of service in the Senate for Senator
8 Jimmy Higdon and therefore his final year leading the event, his legacy will live on for
9 years to come in the hearts and minds of military kids across the Commonwealth;

10 NOW, THEREFORE,

11 *Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of*
12 *Kentucky:*

13 ➔Section 1. The Senate recognizes and honors the children of military families
14 on this Military Kids Day, February 19, 2026.

15 ➔Section 2. When the Senate adjourns this day, it does so in recognition of
16 Senator Jimmy Higdon and his dedication to military families and the creation of Military
17 Kids Day.

18 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this
19 Resolution to Senator Matthew Deneen.