

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 11

BY SENATOR BOUDREAUX

A RESOLUTION

To commend posthumously Corporal Edward Desselle for his bravery and service in the Montford Point Marines and honors him as a recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal.

WHEREAS, Edward Desselle was born on July 27, 1924, in Rosa, Louisiana, to Louis Cornelius Desselle and Rosina Monteilh; and

WHEREAS, he was a member of the first graduating class of Immaculate Conception School in Lebeau, Louisiana, in May 1942; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Desselle was a farmer at an early age then began a career as a CC Camp Worker, a Higgins Shipyard employee, and served his country as a United States Marine from 1944 until 1946; and

WHEREAS, upon allowing African Americans to serve in the United States Marine Corps in 1942, Mr. Desselle enlisted and attended basic training at Montford Point in Jacksonville, North Carolina, in June 1944; and

WHEREAS, he served in the United States Marine Corps from June 10, 1944, until August 17, 1946, as an 062/Steward and was stationed at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, for the duration of his tour where he attained the rank of Corporal; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Desselle wore many hats while serving as a Marine, including carpenter, welder, community supporter, farmer, and rancher; and

WHEREAS, upon receiving an honorable discharge from the United States Marine Corps, Mr. Desselle returned to Louisiana and married his longtime love, Lou Wilda Auzenne, in 1948; and

WHEREAS, to their union two daughters were born, Maxine Desselle Gradney and Francine Desselle Young; and

WHEREAS, on September 23, 2017, Corporal Edward Desselle was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal; and

WHEREAS, the medal, given in recognition of service to the United States, was authorized by Congress and awarded to all Marines who attended recruit training at Montford Point, North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, African-American Marines were not allowed to train with their Caucasian counterparts, which led to segregated training; and

WHEREAS, although the efforts of the first African-American Marines are often overshadowed by more popular and well-known units, their contributions are no less significant; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of those contributions, President Barack Obama signed into law a bill recognizing the efforts and history of the Montford Point Marines by awarding them the Congressional Gold Medal; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Desselle passed away on February 4, 2018, and merits this posthumous commendation for the tremendous honor, integrity, and service that he brought to his family, his community, the state of Louisiana, the United States Marine Corps, the United States of America, and to all who knew and loved him.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend posthumously Corporal Edward Desselle for his bravery and service in the Montford Point Marines, does hereby honor him for being a recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal, and does hereby record for posterity the pride and honor that he brought to his family, friends, community, the state of Louisiana, and the United States of America.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Corporal Edward Desselle.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE