

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 13

BY SENATORS HEWITT, MCMATH AND MIZELL AND REPRESENTATIVES  
DUBUISSON, FRIEMAN, HOLLIS, NELSON, ROBERT OWEN,  
WHITE AND WRIGHT

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend Eugene Lussan on the celebration of his one hundredth birthday.

WHEREAS, Eugene J. Lussan was born in the French Quarter in New Orleans, Louisiana, on October 17, 1920, to Jacque "Jimmy" Lussan and Josephia Impastata Lussan; and

WHEREAS, he grew up in the French Quarter until the age of eleven when his family moved to Gentilly; and

WHEREAS, as a youngster, he made money by walking race horses from the train station on Gentilly Road to The Fairgrounds, crabbing off the seawall on Lake Ponchatrain and selling the crabs for twenty-five cents a dozen, and working at a gas station for six dollars a week when he was older; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lussan attended Jefferson Davis Grade School, Capdau Middle School, and graduated from Warren Eason High School; and

WHEREAS, possessing a great talent for artwork his entire life, after World War II, he attended Delgado College and completed two years in graphic arts, graduating at the top of his class; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lussan enrolled in Delgado College once again for two additional years to complete a two-year course in iron welding, rigging, and reading blue prints, and once again graduated at the top of his class; and

WHEREAS, in 1939, he joined the Louisiana National Guard, serving the 106th Medical Regiment at Jackson Barracks; and

WHEREAS, he was called to active duty at Camp Blanding, Florida, and it was during that time that he met a young lady, Myrtis Louise Dawkins, from Valdosta, Georgia, at a dance where they talked and danced until the wee hours of the morning; and

WHEREAS, after knowing each other for forty-eight hours, Mr. Lussan proposed

and she accepted, and at the time of her passing they had been married more than sixty years;  
and

WHEREAS, they had four children and he is the proud grandfather of eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lussan did not see his son Kenny until after the war ended and Kenny remembers seeing his father in uniform for the first time when he was two years old and thinking the sight of his father was magnificent; and

WHEREAS, in 1940, he was inducted into the United States Army at Camp Blanding in Northern Florida near Georgia and sent to numerous training camps in North Carolina, South Carolina, Fort Dix in New Jersey, and two training camps in Texas, shipping out from Fort Dix to North Africa to Casablanca, Morocco, after eighteen days on the water as the unit dodged German submarines called "The Wolf Pack"; and

WHEREAS, as a medic he was transferred to the 757th Tank Battalion and the 473rd Infantry Regiment, and was one of the very few to serve in both units; and

WHEREAS, he spent two years storming the beaches of Southern Italy from Salerno to Cassino and participated in the liberation of Rome where his unit fought grueling encounters against well-trained German soldiers forcing them all the way back to the Alps; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lussan saw action from a Higgins boat, a tank, and on foot, and remembers mud, mountains, and mules while fighting for fifty-eight days in the same clothing, living in trenches, and calling them "home"; and

WHEREAS, he witnessed many of his friends suffer the ultimate sacrifice and describes the constant fear he felt from endless artillery barrages; and

WHEREAS, on the march northward, his unit faced danger on a daily basis clearing mines by using their bayonets as probes; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lussan describes his unit watching in awe as approximately three thousand planes from the United States flew overhead signaling the beginning of the end of Nazi control in Italy; and

WHEREAS, one day in the city of Genoa, he was handling a phone that did not work well and picked up a button from the ground and banged the phone with it saying, "Hello,

hello," when suddenly a voice said, "Hello. Who is this?" and Mr. Lussan responded, "Who is this?" and the German commander of a five thousand man unit requested to speak with an American commander in order to surrender; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lussan handed the phone to his commander and the Germans surrendered which led to his claim to fame that he single-handedly helped capture thousands of Germans with a button; and

WHEREAS, he was "loaned" to General Charles de Gaulle's French expeditionary force as a result of his outstanding medic skills, combat tenacity, selfless service, and love of country; and

WHEREAS, fighting the German invasion and occupation, General de Gaulle's unit suffered serious injuries to top leadership and great loss of life, and Mr. Lussan was credited with heroic actions that saved many lives; and

WHEREAS, he encountered many brushes with death in hand-to-hand combat for which he earned a Combat Infantryman Badge; and

WHEREAS, for his participation in the liberation of France, Mr. Lussan earned the most prestigious medal, the Croix de Guerre, which was established in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte and is the highest military honor in France with the rank of Chevalier (Knight) in the French Legion of Honor; and

WHEREAS, at the end of the war, and after twenty-seven months of continual battle, he earned a space on the first available plane back to the United States, choosing to return home and carrying his last remaining bullet which he still keeps with him today; and

WHEREAS, Eugene Lussan is an exemplary member of an elite legion whose military service is a story of sacrifice, courage, and a tribute to all who served, and his quiet demeanor and modest testament belies his uncommon achievements even among his peers; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his many achievements, Mr. Lussan has earned the respect and admiration of the countless citizens whose lives he has touched; and

WHEREAS, Eugene Lussan, one of Louisiana's finest sons, merits a special measure of commendation for his achievements as a veteran and in celebration of his one hundredth birthday on October 17, 2020.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend and congratulate Eugene Lussan for his exceptional and exemplary service as a member of the United States military; does hereby express to him enduring appreciation for his distinguished service to the citizens of the state of Louisiana and the United States of America; does hereby commend and congratulate him upon the historic occasion of his one hundredth birthday on October 17, 2020, records for posterity the extraordinary life he has lived; and does hereby extend to him best wishes for continued happiness in all of his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Eugene Lussan.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES