

107<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. CON. RES. 411

Recognizing the exploits of the officers and crew of the S.S. Henry Bacon, a United States Liberty ship that was sunk on February 23, 1945, in the waning days of World War II.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 23, 2002

Mr. GOODLATTE (for himself, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. HOEKSTRA, Mr. FORBES, and Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

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## CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Recognizing the exploits of the officers and crew of the S.S. Henry Bacon, a United States Liberty ship that was sunk on February 23, 1945, in the waning days of World War II.

Whereas during World War II the United States Liberty ship S.S. Henry Bacon was assigned the task of conveying war materials and supplies to the beleaguered Russian nation via the dangerous Arctic Ocean passage (referred to as the Murmansk Run) from Iceland or Scotland to Murmansk in northern Russia, and faithfully fulfilled its mission;

Whereas in early 1945 the British navy, having rescued a number of Norwegian civilians from occupied Norway and transported them to Murmansk, distributed them

among the S.S. Henry Bacon and certain other merchant ships for transportation to England, with 19 of such refugees being assigned to the Henry Bacon;

Whereas a convoy carrying those refugees, designated as Convoy RA 64 and consisting of 35 ships and naval escorts, departed Murmansk on February 17, 1945, amid the worst storms ever registered in the Arctic Ocean;

Whereas the S.S. Henry Bacon, with a full crew and refugees aboard, sailing as part of that convoy, suffered damage from the force of the storms and from internal mechanical problems;

Whereas the S.S. Henry Bacon, while suffering from a loss of steering capacity, lost its place in the convoy and became a stray, unable to communicate with the convoy and required to maintain radio silence;

Whereas the S.S. Henry Bacon was left to its own devices and was in such dire straits that engine room workers used a sledgehammer and wedge to physically turn the ship;

Whereas on February 23, 1945, the S.S. Henry Bacon, alone in the freezing sea over 60 miles from the convoy, came under attack by 23 Junker JU-88 torpedo bombers of the German Luftwaffe;

Whereas armed with only small guns, the United States Navy Armed Guard aboard the ship and the ship's merchant mariners fought gallantly against the oncoming torpedo bombers;

Whereas although mortally wounded after a German pilot was successful in delivering a torpedo to the ship, the S.S. Henry Bacon fought back, shooting down nine enemy planes;

Whereas when the S.S. Henry Bacon began to sink, her captain ensured that all 19 Norwegian refugees aboard received a place in one of the undamaged lifeboats;

Whereas when the lifeboat supply was exhausted, crewmen made rough rafts from the railroad ties that had been used to secure locomotives delivered to Russia;

Whereas the S.S. Henry Bacon went down with 28 members of her crew, including Captain Alfred Carini, Chief Engineer Donald Haviland, Bosun Holcomb Lammon Jr., and the commanding officer of the United States Navy Armed Guard unit aboard, Lieutenant John Sippola, but in its sinking kept the German planes from looking further and locating the main body of the convoy;

Whereas the 19 Norwegian refugees, as well as the other survivors, were rescued by British destroyers and those refugees were ultimately returned to Norway; and

Whereas the actions of the officers and crew of the S.S. Henry Bacon were in the finest tradition of the United States Merchant Marine and the United States Navy and have been recognized by the people of Norway and Russia but, until now, have not been acknowledged by their own Nation: Now, therefore, be it

1        *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*  
2 *concurring)*, That the Congress—

3            (1) recognizes the valiant deeds of the officers  
4            and crew of the S.S. Henry Bacon, a World War II  
5            United States Liberty ship that was sunk by Ger-  
6            man aircraft on February 23, 1945; and

1           (2) requests that the President issue a procla-  
2           mation calling to memory the deeds, exploits, and  
3           sacrifices of the officers and crew of the S.S. Henry  
4           Bacon.

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