

1 SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 33

2 BY BLACK, ANGELO, WARNSTADT, HOUSER, and KIBBIE
3 A Resolution to recognize Vernon J. Baker, the only
4 living World War II Medal of Honor recipient with an
5 Iowa attachment.

6 WHEREAS, Vernon J. Baker of St. Maries, Idaho,
7 lived in the great State of Iowa while attending
8 Clarinda High School, Clarinda, Iowa, where he was a
9 star running back on the Clarinda High School football
10 team, and was a member of the Clarinda High School
11 marching band, and graduated from Clarinda High School
12 with distinct honors in the year 1939; and

13 WHEREAS, Vernon J. Baker, having joined the United
14 States Army following high school, was later ordered
15 to attend officer training school and was commissioned
16 and assigned to the 370th Regiment, 92nd Infantry
17 Division, the first African-American unit to go into
18 combat in World War II; and

19 WHEREAS, First Lieutenant Vernon J. Baker, in
20 personal action against the German enemy, served his
21 country in northern Italy in 1945 and was subsequently
22 and appropriately selected, along with six other
23 African-Americans, for decoration with the Medal of
24 Honor, our nation's highest award for valor and
25 intrepidity beyond the call of duty; and

26 WHEREAS, First Lieutenant Vernon J. Baker was the
27 only living recipient of those seven so honored with
28 the Medal of Honor in ceremonies in the East Room of
29 the White House on January 13, 1997, by President
30 William J. Clinton, who placed the Medal of Honor

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1 around Baker's neck, and Vernon J. Baker today remains
2 the lone living African-American serviceman from World
3 War II to receive the Medal of Honor; and

4 WHEREAS, Vernon J. Baker is but one of three living
5 Medal of Honor recipients of the total 108 having been
6 awarded to soldiers with Iowa attachments; and

7 WHEREAS, it has come to the attention of the
8 General Assembly of the State of Iowa that Vernon J.
9 Baker, of good health virtually all of his 85 years,
10 is now recovering from critical invasive surgery for
11 removal of a malignant brain tumor; and

12 WHEREAS, Vernon J. Baker, Medal of Honor recipient,
13 can best be shown appreciation by a grateful nation by
14 consideration of his medical condition and a
15 resolution of his medical benefits dilemma; and

16 WHEREAS, it is the desire of the citizens of the
17 great State of Iowa, embodied in this Resolution
18 prepared by their representatives in the Iowa Senate,
19 that Vernon J. Baker be acknowledged in the eyes of
20 the nation for his sacrifice and valor, and that
21 appreciation be extended by virtue of actions taken at
22 the national level to alleviate his burden; NOW

23 THEREFORE,

24 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, That this Resolution
25 seeking the relief described above be immediately
26 submitted to the President of the United States; to
27 the congressional delegations of the State of Iowa and
28 the State of Idaho; to the President of the Senate and
29 the Speaker of the House of the State of Idaho; to the
30 Idaho Military Historical Society; and to Vernon J.

1 Baker and Heidy Baker, St. Maries, Idaho.

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