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**Introduced by Senator Morrow**

January 6, 2005

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Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 6— Relative to the 60th anniversary of the World War II invasion of the Island of Iwo Jima.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 6, as introduced, Morrow. Military and veterans: World War II invasion of Iwo Jima.

This measure would commemorate the 60th anniversary of the World War II invasion of the Island of Iwo Jima, the day the United States Marine Corps landed on the fortified beaches of Iwo Jima in opposition to the Japanese Empire, and would urge the people of California to honor the men of the United States who fought and died in the bloodiest battle ever fought by the U.S. Marine Corps in the pursuit of freedom and a just peace.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, February 19, 2005, marks the 60th anniversary of  
2 the World War II invasion of the Island of Iwo Jima; and  
3 WHEREAS, On February 19, 1945, 72,000 U.S. Marines  
4 assaulted heavily fortified Iwo Jima Island and engaged in the  
5 bloodiest battle the United States Marine Corps has ever fought.  
6 More than 6,000 Marines and 200 U.S. Navy men were killed,  
7 and more than 18,000 Marines were wounded in the battle to  
8 seize bomber strips in support of the strategic air war against the  
9 Japanese empire; and  
10 WHEREAS, Major General Harry Schmidt lead the largest  
11 contingent of Marines ever to fight a battle. The 3rd, 4th, and 5th  
12 Marine Divisions, supported by Force Troops units, provided the  
13 landing force, the United States Navy delivered powerful

1 broadsides against the Japanese caves and pillboxes, and two  
2 squadrons of Marine F-4U Corsairs swept in low, unleashing  
3 rockets and machine gun bullets against the Rock Quarry; and

4 WHEREAS, When the Japanese army began the bloodiest  
5 bombardment the Marines ever suffered in the World War II, the  
6 Marines did not panic; the veterans in the ranks steadied the  
7 rookies, junior officers took over for fallen leaders, and shot-up  
8 units merged quickly to maintain the attack. A veteran Marine  
9 combat correspondent reported: “At Tarawa, Saipan, and Tinian,  
10 I saw Marines killed and wounded in a shocking manner, but I  
11 saw nothing like the ghastliness that hung over the Iwo  
12 beachhead”; and

13 WHEREAS, On the fourth day of the battle, Lieutenant Harold  
14 Schrier’s combat patrol reached the top of Mount Suribachi and  
15 raised a 54-by-28 inch American flag. Several hours later a  
16 larger flag was erected, and Associated Press photographer Joe  
17 Rosenthal immortalized the second flag-raising scene in the  
18 heralded picture that won the Pulitzer Prize and was reproduced  
19 around the world as a symbol of Marine fighting tenacity and  
20 skill during World War II. However, raising the flag represented  
21 only the “end of the beginning,” as the bloody battle would rage  
22 on without respite for another month; and

23 WHEREAS, Iwo Jima took such a toll on leaders that junior  
24 officers and enlisted men assumed roles of responsibility  
25 unimaginable in garrison. The ratio of 1.25 Marine casualties  
26 (killed, wounded, missing) for every Japanese killed was the  
27 highest in the war. It was the first and only time a Marine landing  
28 force suffered greater casualties than they inflicted on the  
29 defending garrison; and

30 WHEREAS, Major General Graves Erskine stated at the  
31 dedication of his 3rd Marine Division cemetery at Iwo Jima after  
32 the battle: “Victory was never in doubt. Its cost was. What was in  
33 doubt was whether there would be any of us left to dedicate our  
34 cemetery at the end, or whether the last Marine would die  
35 knocking out the last Japanese gunner.” Admiral Chester  
36 Nimitz’s accolade endured longest, now chiseled into the granite  
37 base of the enormous bronze statue of the Suribachi Marines and  
38 their faithful corpsman at Arlington Cemetery: “Uncommon  
39 valor was a common virtue...”; now, therefore, be it

1     *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*  
2 *thereof concurring,* That in recognition of the historic 60th  
3 Anniversary of the World War II invasion of the Island of Iwo  
4 Jima on February 19, 1945, the Legislature of the State of  
5 California recognizes and honors the thousands of veterans of the  
6 United States Marine Corps who served their country so valiantly  
7 and distinguished themselves above the call of duty, and  
8 recognizes the integral part they played in helping the Allies to  
9 victory in World War II; and be it further  
10     *Resolved,* That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of  
11 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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