

Senate Joint Resolution No. 34

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 17

Senate Joint Resolution No. 34—Relative to Arlington National Cemetery.

[Filed with Secretary of State March 27, 1998.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 34, Johannessen. Arlington National Cemetery.

This measure would memorialize the President and the Congress of the United States to take all necessary action in the future to ensure that the sacred military burial ground of Arlington National Cemetery is maintained for those currently eligible for burial there.

WHEREAS, Arlington National Cemetery is a United States burial ground which was established in 1864; and

WHEREAS, Arlington National Cemetery consists of 420 acres in northeastern Virginia located on the Potomac River across from Washington, D.C., and contains the remains of more than 240,000 former military service members and their spouses and children; and

WHEREAS, Those interred in the cemetery include representatives of the dead from all of America's wars, and many of these representatives achieved personal distinction, including, among others, President John F. Kennedy, General John J. Pershing, and Admiral Robert E. Peary; and

WHEREAS, In addition to those who have died on active duty, others who are eligible for burial in Arlington National Cemetery include, among others: holders of the nation's highest military decorations, including the Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, Air Force Cross, Distinguished Service Medal, Silver Star, and Purple Heart; persons eligible for military retirement under specified conditions; veterans honorably discharged with at least a 30 percent disability before October 1, 1949; the spouse or unmarried child of any of the above persons or of any person already interred in the cemetery; and a veteran who is the parent, brother, sister, or child of an eligible person already interred in the cemetery; and

WHEREAS, Numerous civilians have been exempted from these normal eligibility rules; and

WHEREAS, These exempted persons include Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, a Drug Enforcement Administration agent killed during an assignment in Peru, and a Marine veteran killed in the line of duty as a District of Columbia police officer; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative that this hallowed burial ground be maintained for those currently eligible for interment there; and

WHEREAS, Exemptions to current burial criteria should be held to an absolute minimum and granted only with the exercise of extreme care and good judgment; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and Assembly of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature of the State of California respectfully memorializes the President and the Congress of the United States to take all necessary action in the future to ensure that the sacred military burial ground of Arlington National Cemetery is maintained for those currently eligible for burial there; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President and the Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.

