

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2717

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to designate one city in the United States each year as an “American World War II City”, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 1, 2011

Mr. MCINTYRE introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to designate one city in the United States each year as an “American World War II City”, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress finds the following:

5 (1) Many cities across the United States con-
6 tributed to the war effort during World War II, in-
7 cluding through defense manufacturing, bond drives,
8 service in the Armed Forces, and the presence of
9 military facilities within the city.

1 (2) Many of those cities have sought to preserve
2 the history of those contributions, including through
3 the establishment of preservation organizations or
4 museums, restoration of World War II facilities, and
5 recognition of World War II veterans.

6 (3) The city of Wilmington, North Carolina,
7 made remarkable contributions to the United States
8 war efforts during World War II.

9 (4) During World War II, Wilmington was the
10 country's unique wartime boomtown, aptly and offi-
11 cially named "The Defense Capital of the State".

12 (5) Wilmington based and trained all five mili-
13 tary services: the predecessor to the Air Force at the
14 Wilmington Airport, the Army at Camp Davis and
15 Fort Fisher, the Navy at Fort Caswell, the Coast
16 Guard at Wrightsville Beach, and the Marine Corps
17 at Camp Lejeune.

18 (6) The North Carolina Shipbuilding Company
19 of Wilmington, the State's largest employer at that
20 time, constructed 243 cargo vessels with which to
21 provide goods and equipment to our soldiers.

22 (7) Wilmington provided the Atlantic Coast
23 Line Railroad headquarters, three housing camps for
24 German prisoners of war, a major training base for
25 P-47 fighters, defense industries producing goods

1 and equipment, a British patrol base, and a shipping
2 point for Lend Lease supplies to the Allies.

3 (8) Wilmington dispatched thousands of its
4 sons and daughters to fight the enemy on land, sea,
5 and air as Navy frogmen, P-51 fighter aces,
6 Tuskegee Airmen, submarine skippers, bomber pi-
7 lots, Marine riflemen, Army artillerymen, physicians
8 and nurses, and volunteers of all sorts.

9 (9) Wilmington tragically lost 248 men as a re-
10 sult of their courageous efforts to defend the United
11 States, and two New Hanover High School grad-
12 uates received the Congressional Medal of Honor
13 and numerous others received high decorations for
14 valor, including Navy Crosses, Distinguished Service
15 Crosses, and Distinguished Flying Crosses.

16 (10) Wilmington's strategic position made it
17 vulnerable to enemy attack by German U-boats,
18 which marauded shipping off our beaches. In July
19 1943, in perhaps the only German attack on the
20 United States, a U-boat fired at the Ethel-Dow
21 chemical plant in Wilmington. Wilmington endured
22 this attack, as well as constant civilian defense re-
23 strictions and air raid drills, including black-outs
24 and dim-outs. The city's population more than dou-
25 bled with the influx of military personnel, forcing

1 locals to cope with strain on housing and schools,
2 transportation, medical and social services, law en-
3 forcement, and food supply.

4 **SEC. 2. DESIGNATION OF AMERICAN WORLD WAR II CITIES.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
6 shall designate one city in the United States each year
7 as an “American World War II City”.

8 (b) CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION.—The Secretary
9 shall make each designation under subsection (a) based
10 on the following criteria:

11 (1) Contributions by a city to the war effort
12 during World War II, including those related to de-
13 fense manufacturing, bond drives, service in the
14 Armed Forces, and the presence of military facilities
15 within the city.

16 (2) Efforts by a city to preserve the history of
17 the city’s contributions during World War II, includ-
18 ing through the establishment of preservation orga-
19 nizations or museums, restoration of World War II
20 facilities, and recognition of World War II veterans.

21 (c) FIRST AMERICAN WORLD WAR II CITY.—The
22 city of Wilmington, North Carolina, is designated as an
23 “American World War II City”.

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