

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 58th Legislature (2022)

HOUSE

RESOLUTION 1059

By: Smith and Roberts (Dustin)

AS INTRODUCED

A Resolution honoring and giving gratitude to Cpl.
Phillip W. Coon for his courage and sacrifice during
his service to the United States and during the
Bataan Death March.

WHEREAS, after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7,
1941, and the United States declared war on Japan, Oklahoma native
and Muscogee (Creek) tribal member, Phillip W. Coon, served in the
United States Army and valiantly fought in the Pacific Theater; and

WHEREAS, in April of 1942, following the Battle of Mount Samat,
Corporal Coon was captured by Japan's Imperial Army, attempting to
escape to safety; and

WHEREAS, Corporal Coon was forced to march on what would become
known as the Bataan Death March for sixty-two (62) miles in
scorching tropical heat while starving and being brutalized along
the way to become a prisoner of war where he worked the burial

1 detail before being transferred to Moji, Japan, to work as a
2 prisoner of war in a copper mine for three years; and

3 WHEREAS, Corporal Coon was liberated as a prisoner of war in
4 September of 1945; and

5 WHEREAS, for his brave and unwavering service to his country,
6 Corporal Coon received the American Defense Service Ribbon with one
7 Bronze Star, an Asiatic Pacific Campaign Ribbon with two Bronze
8 Stars, the Philippine Defense Ribbon with one Bronze Star, a
9 Distinguished Unit Badge with two Oak Leaf Clusters, and the prized
10 "Combat Infantry Badge", given only to soldiers who battled in the
11 front lines; and

12 WHEREAS, Corporal Coon has been honored by the State of Oklahoma
13 for his service to his country by receiving the Prisoner of War
14 Medal, and participated in the Japanese and American Prisoner of War
15 Friendship Program; and

16 WHEREAS, Corporal Coon changed the lives of people by setting an
17 example of sacrifice and patriotism by being a member of the
18 "Greatest Generation" and expressing absolute pride in his Creek
19 heritage; and

20 WHEREAS, on June 23, 2014, Corporal Coon passed away as a loving
21 family man and a devoted community member; and

22 WHEREAS, April 9, 2022, marks the eightieth anniversary of the
23 Bataan Death March;

1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
2 OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 58TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

3 THAT the Legislature hereby extends special gratitude and honor
4 to Corporal Phillip W. Coon and the men of the United States Army
5 who valiantly fought for our country and endured years of forced
6 labor as Prisoners of War after the excruciating sixty-two (62) mile
7 Bataan Death March on the eightieth anniversary of the event that
8 took the lives of hundreds of Americans.

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10 58-2-11269 KN 04/07/22