HLS 15RS-4165 ORIGINAL

2015 Regular Session

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HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 217

BY REPRESENTATIVE ARMES

MILITARY AFFAIRS/NATL GD: Requests the Louisiana Congressional Delegation to urge the secretary for the United States Army to allow the burial of a national guardsman at Arlington National Cemetery

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2	To urge and request that the Louisiana Congressional delegation send a formal request to the
3	secretary of the United States Army to reconsider the decision denying the family of
4	Staff Sergeant Thomas Florich the right to bury Staff Sergeant Florich at Arlington
5	National Cemetery, a place of sacred honor.
6	WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Thomas Florich of Fairfax County, Virginia, enlisted in
7	the Louisiana National Guard in 2007, as a Black Hawk repairer, served state deployments
8	for Operation Deepwater Horizon and Hurricane Isaac, earning more than one hundred
9	twenty-five flight hours, and was also a graduate of the warrior leader course; and
10	WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Thomas Florich was a member of A Company, 1st
11	Assault Helicopter Battalion, 244th Aviation Regiment, headquartered in Hammond, and
12	was living in Baton Rouge as he served in the guard while he also attended Louisiana State
13	University; and
14	WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Florich was twenty-six years old when he and his crew
15	flew out of Eglin Air Force Base near Pensacola, Florida, on March 10, 2015, to engage in
16	a nighttime water insertion operation with Marine Special Operations Command personnel
17	from Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, but the aircraft, without warning, suddenly crashed into
18	Santa Rosa Sound and all aboard perished; and
19	WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Florich was married and leaves behind his wife who is
20	now seven months pregnant with his child, his father, and stepmother; and

1 WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Florich was in uniform and acting in his capacity as a 2 crew chief and door gunner in a training exercise that took place during adverse weather 3 conditions on that tragic day; unfortunately, the U.S. Army does not include National Guard 4 training exercises in the definition of "active duty" status and has therefore denied his 5 family's request for Staff Sergeant Florich to be buried in ground interment at Arlington 6 National Cemetery due to eligibility requirements regarding internment and inurnment; and 7 WHEREAS, this Sergeant may not have been in "active duty" status as defined by 8 the U.S. Army, but he was performing his duties and serving his country and should be 9 allowed to be buried at Arlington National Cemetery alongside other servicemen and his 10 grandfather who was a green beret, who also gave his life among many others in an effort 11 to protect this state and country; and 12 WHEREAS, Louisiana National Guard, Major General Glenn Curtis sent a letter to 13 the secretary of the U.S. Army, John McHugh, asking that the decision be reconsidered. 14 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby 15 urge and request the Louisiana Congressional delegation to send a formal request that the 16 decision denying the family of Staff Sergeant Thomas Florich the right to bury Staff 17 Sergeant Florich at Arlington National Cemetery, a place of sacred honor, be reconsidered. 18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of the Resolution be transmitted to each 19 member of the Louisiana Congressional delegation.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HCR 217 Original

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Armes

Requests the Louisiana Congressional delegation to send a formal request that the decision denying the family of Staff Sergeant Thomas Florich the right to bury Staff Sergeant Florich at Arlington National Cemetery, a place of sacred honor, be reconsidered.