

Senate Resolution 942

By: Senator Smith of the 52nd

ADOPTED SENATE

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring Admiral John Henry Towers and authorizing the placing of his portrait in the state
2 capitol; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, John Henry Towers was born in Rome, Georgia, in 1885 into a family with a
4 history of military service; and

5 WHEREAS, he graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1906 and began his
6 distinguished career on board the battleship *Kentucky*; and

7 WHEREAS, in 1910, he requested to be assigned to aviation duty and learned to fly the
8 Navy's first seaplane, the Curtiss A-1, and was designated Naval Aviator No. 3; and

9 WHEREAS, in every chapter of the development of naval aviation, John Henry Towers was
10 present; and

11 WHEREAS, he began training pilots in 1912 in Annapolis, Maryland, and, in 1914, he
12 established the first naval air station in an abandoned Navy yard in Pensacola, Florida, where
13 the Navy still trains its pilots; and

14 WHEREAS, in 1919, he organized, trained, and commanded the first transatlantic air
15 crossing and became an international celebrity; and

16 WHEREAS, in 1921, he began training Navy pilots in land planes in anticipation of the
17 advent of the aircraft carrier and later became the executive officer and commander of the
18 first Navy aircraft carrier, the *Langley*, and later commanded the *U.S.S. Saratoga*; and

19 WHEREAS, in 1939, he became the first naval aviator to achieve flag rank as Chief of the
20 Bureau of Aeronautics and organized the expansion of the naval air forces from 2,000 to
21 nearly 10,000 airplanes in two years; and

WHEREAS, he directed naval and marine aviation in the opening period of World War II, working with President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Representative Carl Vinson, and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill to supply aviation equipment to the British; and

WHEREAS, he was constantly called upon for consultation by the Congress of the United States concerning aviation questions and problems and was known by his peers as the "Crown Prince of Naval Aviation;" and

WHEREAS, during World War II, he served as the Commander of the Naval Air Forces for the Pacific Fleet and led the expansion of carrier forces and the use of the aircraft carrier as a powerful combat weapon; and

WHEREAS, in 1945, he was one of the United States representatives at the Japanese surrender on the *U.S.S. Missouri* in Tokyo Bay; and

WHEREAS, on December 1, 1947, after 45 years of dedicated service, he retired from active duty as a four-star admiral, the first Georgian to achieve such a rank in any branch of the military; and

WHEREAS, he has been inducted into the Naval Aviation Hall of Fame, the United States Aviation Hall of Fame, and the International Aviation Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, he died in 1955 and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery; and

WHEREAS, his wisdom, courage, vision, leadership, innovation, and achievements have brought honor to him and the State of Georgia, and it is fitting that such a distinguished Georgian be appropriately honored.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA that the members of this body recognize the tremendous achievements and accomplishments of Admiral John Henry Towers and honor his memory for his service to this nation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body, in recognition of the distinguished service and dedication of Admiral John Henry Towers, directs that a portrait of Admiral Towers be placed at an appropriate location on the third or fourth floor of the state capitol building with the location of such portrait to be selected by the Governor, the Speaker of the House of

1 Representatives, and the President of the Senate. No state funds shall be used for the
2 purchase of the portrait.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
4 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the family of Admiral John Henry
5 Towers.