

Senate Resolution 581

By: Senator Smith of the 52nd

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Capitol Arts Standards Commission to authorize the placement of a portrait in the
2 state capitol honoring Admiral John Henry Towers; 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 U.S.S. *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 U.S.S. *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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body,
22 in recognition of the distinguished service and dedication of Admiral John Henry Towers,
23 urges the Capitol Arts Standards Commission to authorize the placement of a portrait of
24 Admiral Towers at an appropriate location on the third or fourth floor of the state capitol
25 building. No state funds shall be used for the purchase of the portrait.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
27 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the Capitol Arts Standards Commission.