

House Resolution 135

By: Representatives Loudermilk of the 14th, Dempsey of the 13th, Reece of the 11th, and Crawford of the 16th

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 onboard the battleship USS *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 USS *Langley*, and later commanded the USS *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

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

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

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

31 WHEREAS, in 1945, he was one of the United States representatives at the Japanese
32 surrender on the USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay; and

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

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

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

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

42 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
43 the members of this body, in recognition of the distinguished service and dedication of
44 Admiral John Henry Towers, urge the Capitol Art Standards Commission to authorize the
45 placement of a portrait of Admiral Towers at an appropriate location on the third or fourth
46 floor of the state capitol building. No state funds shall be used for the purchase of the
47 portrait.

48 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
49 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the Capitol Art Standards
50 Commission.