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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 547

Offered January 27, 2025

*Commending John Percy Burch, Jr.*_____
Patron—Walker

WHEREAS, John Percy Burch, Jr., a member of the Greatest Generation who served the nation during World War II and a respected member of the community in Lynchburg, celebrated his 100th birthday on January 12, 2025; and

WHEREAS, John Burch grew up in Lynchburg and joined the United States Army on May 7, 1943 in the midst of World War II; and

WHEREAS, John Burch received medical and surgical training at Fort Pickett, now known as Fort Barfoot, in Blackstone, and was assigned to the 99th General Hospital at the former Fort Ethan Allen in Burlington, Vermont; and

WHEREAS, after completing additional training, John Burch deployed to England in 1944 and set up medical aid stations at the staging areas for the impending invasion of France; and

WHEREAS, in support of the D-Day landings at Normandy, France, in June 1944, John Burch and the other members of 99th General Hospital were dropped by glider near Sainte-Mère-Église, eight miles behind enemy lines, and provided critical surgical care for other airborne units; and

WHEREAS, John Burch and the 99th General Hospital were subsequently ordered to establish a battlefield hospital near Reims, France, where they worked long and arduous days to care for wounded soldiers, often performing surgery in tents, churches, or other improvised spaces; and

WHEREAS, John Burch later participated in the famed Battle of the Bulge and fought in the bitter cold winter of December 1944 and January 1945; he overcame numerous challenges to serve his fellow soldiers in need and help the Allied lines withstand what would be the last major German offensive of the war; and

WHEREAS, John Burch was honorably discharged as a sergeant on November 18, 1945, and returned to Lynchburg where he attended college, opened a business as a certified public accountant, and raised his beloved family, which includes two daughters, three grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, after his well-earned retirement, John Burch moved to Florida, where he worked as an ombudsman in surgery and recovery at a hospital in Fort Lauderdale and served the community as a volunteer; he formed the philanthropic organization Tuesday's Angels, which raised more than \$3 million to support people with AIDS and their families; and

WHEREAS, at the age of 98, John Burch returned home to Lynchburg yet again and led efforts to honor his fellow veterans with the installation of the Battlefield Cross at Monument Terrace; he has remained active in the community and was inducted into the Patrick Henry Chapter of the Virginia Society, Sons of the American Revolution; and

WHEREAS, among many awards and accolades for his achievements, John Burch received the French Legion of Honor (Chevalier) award, the highest military honor of France; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That John Percy Burch, Jr., hereby be commended on the occasion of his 100th birthday; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to John Percy Burch, Jr., as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for his lifetime of service to the Commonwealth and the nation.

INTRODUCED

HR547