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## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 367

Offered February 12, 2025

*Commending members of the 100th Infantry (Century) Division.*

Patrons—Reeves, Cifers, Craig, DeSteph, Diggs, Durant, Hackworth, McDougale and Salim; Delegates: Clark, Cordoza, Earley, Ennis, Garrett, Green, Keys-Gamarra, McQuinn, Obenshain, Orrock, Owen, Rasoul, Scott, P.A., Ware, Watts, Webert and Wright

WHEREAS, March 16, 2025, marks the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the citadel town of Bitche, France, by the 100th Infantry (Century) Division, a significant victory in the Allied campaign to liberate France during World War II; and

WHEREAS, since the time of the Roman Empire, the hilltop at Bitche has served as a critical defensive position, with its fortifications significantly strengthened during the 17th century by the renowned French military engineer Sébastien Le Prestre de Vauban, whose designs made it one of the most formidable strongholds in Europe; and

WHEREAS, the fortress at Bitche famously withstood numerous assaults, including during the Franco-Prussian War and the German invasion of 1940, and had never been taken by force until its liberation by the 100th Infantry Division during World War II; and

WHEREAS, during the liberation of the citadel and town of Bitche, the 100th Infantry Division was under the leadership of Major General Withers A. Burress, a native of Richmond, graduate of the Virginia Military Institute (VMI) Class of 1914, and former commandant of cadets at VMI in 1938; and

WHEREAS, the 100th Infantry Division was part of the 7th Army commanded by Lt. General Alexander M. Patch, who himself served as a commandant of cadets at the Staunton Military Academy; and

WHEREAS, in March 1945, thousands of brave soldiers of the 100th Infantry Division, including hundreds of Virginians, played a pivotal role in the liberation of Bitche and surrounding areas from German occupation, earning the distinguished nom de guerre “The Sons of Bitche” in recognition of their valor and sacrifice during this historic victory; and

WHEREAS, after the war, the 100th Infantry Division was reorganized as the 100th Airborne Division, then subsequently became the 100th Training Division (Leadership Development); it is currently based at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and serves as a major training command of the United States Army Reserve; and

WHEREAS, the legacy of the 100th Infantry Division and the liberation of Bitche continues to resonate, serving as a powerful testament to the courage, resilience, and dedication of those who fought for freedom and forged enduring bonds between the people of Virginia and France; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend members of the 100th Infantry (Century) Division on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Bitche, France, on March 16, 2025; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to members of the 100th Infantry (Century) Division as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for their legacy of toughness, courage, and determination and appreciation of the importance of this historic victory during World War II.

INTRODUCED

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