

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 96

BY SENATORS ADLEY, ALARIO, ALLAIN, AMEDEE, APPEL, BROOME, BROWN, BUFFINGTON, CHABERT, CLAITOR, CORTEZ, CROWE, DONAHUE, DORSEY-COLOMB, ERDEY, GALLOT, GUILLORY, HEITMEIER, JOHNS, KOSTELKA, LAFLEUR, LONG, MARTINY, MILLS, MORRELL, MORRISH, MURRAY, NEVERS, PEACOCK, PERRY, PETERSON, RISER, GARY SMITH, JOHN SMITH, TARVER, THOMPSON, WALSWORTH, WARD AND WHITE

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana to the family of United States Army Staff Sergeant Richard Vazquez upon his death in combat action in Afghanistan.

WHEREAS, Richard Vazquez was born in Mansfield, Louisiana, and moved with his family to Seguin, Texas, in 2000, where he impressed the high school and community with his exceptional athletic abilities becoming the star quarterback for the Seguin Matadores; and

WHEREAS, the 2004 Seguin High School graduate immediately enlisted in the U.S. Army as an infantry soldier, and after training, he was assigned to the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division at Ft. Campbell, Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Vazquez was assigned to be his squad's Radio Telephone Operator and Junior Scout Observer and was soon deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom from 2005 to 2006; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Vazquez was again deployed to Iraq from 2007 to 2008, where he served as a Team Leader, but he had higher aspirations and eventually volunteered to become a member of the Army's Special Forces and wear the Green Beret; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Vazquez graduated from the Special Forces Qualification Course in 2010, and as a Special Forces Weapons Sergeant he was assigned to Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne), stationed at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Vazquez continued to train hard and successfully completed the U.S. Army Basic Airborne Course, U.S. Army Air Assault School, Combat Lifesaver Course, Warrior Leader Course, the Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape

Course, Senior and Master Mountaineer Courses, and Special Operations Force Sensitive Site Exploitation Advanced Operator Course; and

WHEREAS, as the war in Iraq was drawing to a close, Staff Sergeant Vazquez, now an experienced and highly trained infantry asset, was deployed to Afghanistan for three tours where men of his skills and abilities were needed in Operation Enduring Freedom; and

WHEREAS, it was on his fifth combat deployment to Southwest Asia that Staff Sergeant Vazquez received a mission to conduct a dismounted patrol in Kandahar Province on November 13, 2013; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Vazquez was twenty-eight years old when he and his unit engaged a heavily armed enemy force in the small town of Pamjwai, Afghanistan, and he was mortally wounded by an improvised explosive device used by the enemy; and

WHEREAS, Staff Sergeant Vazquez' awards and decorations include the Purple Heart, the Army Commendation Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Army Achievement Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Meritorious Unit Citation, two awards of the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal with one Campaign Star, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon with Numeral 2, the Army Service Ribbon, two awards of the Overseas Service Ribbon, the NATO Medal, the Master Driver Badge, the Air Assault Badge, the Parachutist Badge, the Special Forces Tab and the highly prized Combat Infantryman Badge.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby extend its deepest and most profound condolences to the family of U.S. Army Special Forces Staff Sergeant Richard Vazquez for their immeasurable loss and his brave total sacrifice in the service of his country.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Staff Sergeant Vazquez' mother Teresa Paddle and his father Ted Vazquez.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE