

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY MARTIN

2

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 53

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FIFTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5

Urging the United States Secretary of

6

the Navy to name a United States naval

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vessel after General Clifton B. Cates.

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BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

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WHEREAS from time-to-time the United States has produced great men

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whose numerous deeds of valor and honor evidence their greatness and make a

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listing of the details of their heroic service unnecessary; and

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WHEREAS in the annals of the military history of the United States

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there have been few men of the august stature of General Clifton B. Cates,

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19th Commandant of the United States Marine Corps, a man whose military

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career served the most inviolate principles of freedom and preparedness and

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stands as exemplary testimony to the irrefutable value of the American way

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of life; and

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WHEREAS Clifton B. Cates entered the Marine Corps as a second lieuten-

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ant in 1917 at the beginning of World War I, and during the course of the

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swiftly-moving two years that followed, the young man from Tiptonville,

21

Tennessee, found his true element, and the Marine Corps found one of its

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most capable and colorful leaders; and

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WHEREAS immediately after completion of officer training, Lieutenant

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Cates found himself commanding troops as a platoon leader in the 96th

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Company, Sixth Marines, and his battalion sailed for France in January

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1918; and

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WHEREAS General Cates holds the singular distinction of being the most

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decorated Marine Corps officer of World War I, having been awarded the Navy

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Cross, Distinguished Service Cross with Oak-Leaf Cluster, Silver Star with

1 Oak-Leaf Cluster, and Purple Heart for his meritorious military service,  
2 while France conferred upon him the Legion of Honor and Croix de Guerre  
3 with one gilt star and two palms; and

4 WHEREAS in June 1944, near the end of the Saipan operation Major  
5 General Cates returned to the Pacific to assume the post of Commanding  
6 General of the Fourth Marine Division and commanded the division in the  
7 assault of Tinian, throughout Iwo Jima, and for the remainder of World War  
8 II; and

9 WHEREAS on January 1, 1948, Major General Cates was promoted to  
10 general and assumed the prestigious post of Commandant of the Marine Corps,  
11 in which office he was destined to have an eventful administration; and

12 WHEREAS when the outbreak of hostilities in Korea presented the  
13 commandant with an emergency, General Cates, with great organization,  
14 efficiency and alacrity, was able to send the First Provisional Marine  
15 Brigade and its air component to the Far East within nine days following  
16 the order for its activation; and

17 WHEREAS General Cates' administration as commandant witnessed the  
18 practical development by the Marine Corps of two important tactical inno-  
19 vations, the helicopter and body armor; and

20 WHEREAS current United States naval policy favors the selection of  
21 heroes of the naval service when vessels are named, with only a very few  
22 marines being singled out for this distinguished honor; and

23 WHEREAS the Alaska State Legislature feels that it would be very  
24 fitting to name an appropriate United States naval vessel in honor of  
25 General Clifton B. Cates, a marine of great distinction, courage, and  
26 character whose unremitting service to his country spanned three wars and  
27 five decades;

28 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United  
29 States Secretary of the Navy to name a guided missile destroyer or other

1 United States naval vessel after General Clifton B. Cates, 19th Commandant  
2 of the United States Marine Corps.

3 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable James H.  
4 Webb, Jr., U. S. Secretary of the Navy; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens  
5 and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don  
6 Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.