

ONE HUNDRED FOURTH LEGISLATURE

FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION 355

Introduced by Campbell, 25.

WHEREAS, the USS Oriskany, an Essex-class aircraft carrier, was ordered in August 1942, launched in October 1945, and commissioned in 1950. It was nicknamed "Mighty O" and was the last Essex-class ship constructed. The ship is named for the Revolutionary War Battle of Oriskany, New York, which occurred in 1777; and

WHEREAS, the USS Oriskany was the first aircraft carrier to round Cape Horn in 1952, operated primarily in the Pacific into the 1970s, and earned two battle stars for service in the Korean War and five battle stars for service in the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, in 1966 one of the worst shipboard fires since World War II broke out on USS Oriskany when a magnesium flare was accidentally ignited, killing 44 of the crew, many of whom were veteran combat pilots; and

WHEREAS, following repairs which were completed in March 1967, the USS Oriskany returned to service and on October 26, 1967, Lieutenant Commander John McCain flew from the USS Oriskany in an A-4 Skyhawk on his 23rd bombing mission of the Vietnam War before being shot down and captured; and

WHEREAS, USS Oriskany is referenced in the 1986 film Top Gun and featured in films such as The Bridges of Toko-Ri; and

WHEREAS, the USS Oriskany was decommissioned in 1976, and in 2006 the ship was sunk to form an artificial reef in the Gulf of Mexico off the coast of Florida where it remains and is known popularly as the "Great Carrier Reef." It is considered one of the top ten wreck diving sites in the world; and

WHEREAS, 470 United States Navy and Marine Corps veterans who served on the USS Oriskany, together with veterans' widows, have formed the USS Oriskany Reunion Association and hold reunions annually; and

WHEREAS, on October 4-7, 2015, the USS Oriskany reunion will be held in Lincoln.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA, FIRST SESSION:

1. That the Legislature commends the veterans who served on the USS Oriskany and welcomes to Nebraska those who will attend the 25th USS Oriskany reunion on October 4-7, 2015.

2. That a copy of this resolution be presented to the organizers of the USS Oriskany reunion, Bob and Barbara Frazier of Lincoln.