HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 2015-4617, by Representative Kochmar

WHEREAS, The Washington State Legislature recognizes and honors the extreme bravery and honor that was displayed over 60 years ago by James Hayden in both World War II and the Korean War; and

WHEREAS, James Hayden left his home of Kentucky in 1944 at the age of 18 to serve in the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, On March 15, 1945, James Hayden was on a routine patrol and found a tunnel after seeing a German soldier poke his head out of it; and

WHEREAS, When Private Hayden charged inside to route the enemy, grenade fire rendered his rifle inoperable; and

WHEREAS, Private Hayden immediately obtained another rifle and charged back in, where he single-handedly killed two German soldiers, wounded four, and captured 12 prisoners; and

WHEREAS, James Hayden was awarded the Silver Star for these heroic actions; and

WHEREAS, Less than two months later James Hayden received a Purple Heart after taking a German bullet to the leg, ending his participation in World War II; and

WHEREAS, James Hayden's overwhelming patriotism led him back to the action by 1950, when he served in the Korean War; and

WHEREAS, On December 1, 1950, James Hayden was captured in battle alongside 100 of his comrades; and

WHEREAS, James Hayden miraculously survived years of harsh treatment through the camaraderie of his fellow prisoners and his Catholic faith until he was released nearly three years later on September 5, 1953; and

WHEREAS, James Hayden's repeated actions of "just doing his duty" have saved countless lives, touched the hearts of many, and reflect an uncommon heroism and modesty; and

WHEREAS, The courage that James Hayden was able to express during his time in Germany and Korea did not end when he finally returned home; and

WHEREAS, James Hayden has repeatedly combatted tragedy with calm and courage, and is an example to follow for his loving family; and

WHEREAS, James Hayden continues to inspire many with the valor and honor that he showed in both World War II and the Korean War; and

WHEREAS, James Hayden never received his Korean Prisoner of War and Korean Service Medals for various reasons, including a fire that destroyed service records; and

WHEREAS, 61 years later on September 3, 2014, at a ceremony on Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Major General Terry Ferrell, commander of the 7th Infantry Division, honored Retired Army Master Sergeant James Hayden with a Prisoner of War Medal and a Korean War Service Medal from the Republic of Korea;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State House of Representatives join the citizens of the State of Washington, the citizens of the United States of America, and the family of James Hayden in recognizing his unwavering valor, courage, and dedication to his country; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives to James Hayden and his family.