



SR1201

LRB098 21316 MST 59540 r

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate wish to recognize the life of Otis J. Neal of Paris, who passed away on May 18, 1968; and

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WHEREAS, Otis Neal first served his country in 1916 during the Mexican Border Expedition, then in World War I, where he fought in the battles of Lorraine and Aisne, and again in World War II, where he served in the European Theater and Northern Africa; and

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WHEREAS, Otis Neal was born in Pleasureville, Kentucky on October 11, 1898 to James Henry and Elizabeth (nee Coleman) Neal, but moved with his family to Paris at a young age, and he would remain a resident the rest of his life; he married Mary Jean England; and

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WHEREAS, Otis Neal's descendants include a daughter, Sandra Neal Darby; 2 granddaughters, Deedra Darby Jones and Chastity Darby Arrasmith; and 3 great-grandchildren, Jordan Arrasmith, Mekenzie Arrasmith, and Jada Jones; and

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WHEREAS, At the time of Otis Neal's passing, he was survived by a sister, Hattie Mae Thomas; he was preceded in death by 3 brothers and 2 sisters; and

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1           WHEREAS, Otis Neal was a member of the local American  
2 Legion post, where he proudly served as a member of the Honor  
3 Guard; he was affiliated with Grace AME Church; and

4           WHEREAS, Until recently, the grave of Otis Neal has been  
5 obscure and was not befitting of his dedication and  
6 accomplishments as a soldier in the 8th Illinois National Guard  
7 - a unit comprised of African-American soldiers; on May 24,  
8 2014 he will be the focus of a military tribute at Edgar  
9 Cemetery in Paris where a new monument will be unveiled in his  
10 honor; therefore, be it

11           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL  
12 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we recognize the life  
13 of Otis J. Neal and honor his service to his country; and be it  
14 further

15           RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
16 presented to the family of Otis Neal in honor of his service.