



General Assembly

**House Joint
Resolution No. 92**

February Session, 2022

LCO No. 2332



Referred to Committee on VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Introduced by:
(VA)

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING CHIEF HAROLD TANTAQUIDGEON.

Resolved by this Assembly:

1 WHEREAS, Chief Harold Tantaquidgeon was admired throughout
2 Connecticut, both for his devotion to the culture and history of Native
3 Americans in this state and also for his brave service with the armed
4 forces of the United States; and

5 WHEREAS, Harold Albert Tantaquidgeon was born on June 18, 1904,
6 in Mohegan, Connecticut, a citizen of the Mohegan Tribe and the fourth
7 of seven children of John Tantaquidgeon and Harriet Fielding; and

8 WHEREAS, Harold's formal education ended with the completion of
9 eighth grade, but he learned a great many other skills, including how to
10 survive in the wilderness, from his father that would prove invaluable
11 later in his life; and

12 WHEREAS, Harold was too young to enlist when World War I broke
13 out so he joined the Home Guard in Norwich, but soon realized as he
14 observed the docks whenever he traveled through New London that his

15 future would be with the United States Coast Guard; and

16 WHEREAS, in 1921, when Harold was seventeen years of age, he
17 reported to the United States Customs House in New London and told
18 a recruiting officer that he wished to join the Coast Guard and serve
19 aboard *Pequot*, a ship his uncle had served aboard when it was used for
20 fishing and whaling purposes; and

21 WHEREAS, *Pequot's* new purposes were to lay and repair
22 underwater telegraph cables along the East and Gulf Coasts of the
23 United States and answer calls for assistance from lighthouses and
24 remote islands; and

25 WHEREAS, Harold advanced to seaman first class after two years on
26 *Pequot* and would shortly thereafter, while serving on *Pequot II*, advance
27 to quartermaster; and

28 WHEREAS, in 1927, when Harold was twenty-three years of age, he
29 was put in charge of the seventy-five-foot cutter, CG-289, becoming one
30 of the youngest chief petty officers in the history of the United States
31 Coast Guard and the first Native American to achieve the rank of chief
32 boatswain's mate; and

33 WHEREAS, CG-289's patrol of Long Island Sound and the coast of
34 New York helped enforce the country's liquor laws during Prohibition;
35 and

36 WHEREAS, Harold remained on CG-289 until he left the Coast
37 Guard, receiving an honorable discharge; and

38 WHEREAS, during World War II, Harold joined the United States
39 Army's 5th Air Force, becoming a gunner with the 418th Night Fighter
40 Squadron; and

41 WHEREAS, on July 27, 1944, Harold's plane was shot down and
42 crash-landed in New Guinea, but he and his crew of four survived the
43 twenty-three days they were missing due to his knowledge of

44 wilderness survival skills, and he was accordingly commended for
45 distinguished service; and

46 WHEREAS, on the completion of his military service, Harold
47 returned to Connecticut and resided on the Tantaquidgeon family farm
48 in Uncasville, next door to the Tantaquidgeon Museum, which Harold
49 had founded in 1931 with his father, John, and his sister, Gladys; and

50 WHEREAS, Harold was a pillar of the Tantaquidgeon Museum,
51 lecturing on Native American lore and traditions and teaching survival
52 skills; and

53 WHEREAS, on April 4, 1989, Chief Harold Tantaquidgeon passed
54 away at the age of eighty-four; and

55 WHEREAS, the legacy of Chief Harold Tantaquidgeon is a source of
56 pride for Native Americans, veterans, members of the armed forces and
57 all citizens of the state of Connecticut.

58 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Connecticut General
59 Assembly hereby recognizes the life and work of Chief Harold
60 Tantaquidgeon and may further recognize him by other appropriate
61 means; and

62 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Clerks of the House of
63 Representatives and the Senate cause a copy of this resolution to be
64 delivered to Chief Harold Tantaquidgeon's family as an expression of
65 the high esteem in which he is held.

VA *Joint Favorable*