

*Before the Board of Supervisors in and for the
County of Monterey, State of California*

Resolution No.:

Adopt a resolution recognizing **John Edward Laughton** for his distinguished service as a United States Merchant Marine during World War II and declaring November 12, 2024, as **John Edward Laughton Day** in Monterey County.

WHEREAS, John Edward Laughton was born on October 13, 1921, in San Bernadino County to Frank and Estella Mae Laughton, and later relocating to Salinas, California, where he was raised and attended local schools, including graduating from Salinas High School; and

WHEREAS, In 1941, John Edward Laughton attended Salinas Junior College, now Hartnell College where he met his wife Lorna Louise Kueber; and

WHEREAS, In January of 1942, John Edward Laughton received his draft notice #441, it was the second number drawn locally in Monterey County and made the local news; and

WHEREAS, In June 1942, at age 20, John Edward Laughton and his friend Jack Frusetto took a train to San Francisco down Market street to look at all the offices of different branches of military to sign up for the service, they ran into an office that said, " Join the Merchant Marines", a few weeks later, they were sent to basic training at Treasure Island in San Francisco Bay; and

WHEREAS, John Edward Laughton and other crew members were deployed to Okinawa, Japan aboard the SS Hobb's Victory Ship caring 6000 tons of ammuniton and arrived on April 6, 1945; and

WHEREAS, On April 6, 1945, at 6:50pm the S.S. Hobb's Victory Ship was struck by Kamikazee airplanes and sunk; and

WHEREAS, John Edward Laughton ended up in a life boat saving several of his shipmates. Unfortunately, 11 out of 99 crewmen were killed that day and many others were injured; and

WHEREAS, According to the National World War II Museum, between 1939 and 1945, more than 9,500 merchant mariners lost their lives, a higher proportion than those killed in any military branch; and

WHEREAS, Despite their service and sacrifice, for decades, Merchant Marines did not have veteran status or benefits. A Congressional Act in 1988 made these unsung heroes eligible for benefits through the Department of Veterans Affairs. In 2020, Congress passed the Merchant Mariners of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act to recognize the Merchant Mariners for their courage and contributions during the war; and

WHEREAS, In May 2022 John Edward Laughton was finally honored with the Congressional Gold Medal in San Francisco for his courage and contribution; and

WHEREAS, John Edward Laughton also represented the Merchant Marines on a national stage. President Joe Biden invited him and four fellow WWII Merchant Marines to participate in Memorial Day activities, including laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Solider in Arlington National Cemetery; and

WHEREAS, John Edward Laughton turned 103 years old on October 13, 2024 and has been a long-standing advocate of the American Merchant Marine Veterans; and

WHEREAS, John Edward Laughton enjoys spending time with of his 3 grandchildren, Betsy, Allyson and Karl and his great grandchildren Jayla, Jamey, Jaleaha, Lahna, JJ, Clarke and Jack.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors, on behalf of the County and all residents thereof, honors **John Edward Laughton** and commends him for his heroism, sacrifice and dedication to our nation and declares November 12, 2024, as **John Edward Laughton Day** in Monterey County. Our country’s greatness is built on the foundation of his courage in service to our country. The County of Monterey hereby salutes and honors his bravery and heroic actions.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2024, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

I, Valerie Ralph, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Monterey, State of California, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of an original order of said Board of Supervisors duly made and entered in the minutes thereof of Minute Book _____ for the meeting on _____, 2024.

Dated:

Valerie Ralph, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
County of Monterey, State of California.

By _____
Deputy