



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1836-2001, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1836

Resolution welcoming home from China the 24 members of the United States Armed Forces who made up the crew of the EP-3E Aries II surveillance plane downed over Hainan Island, especially Staten Island resident and Navy cryptographer Kenneth Richter.

By The Speaker (Council Member Vallone) and Council Members Oddo, Malave-Dilan, Freed, Leffler, Marshall, Michels, Moskowitz, Nelson, Pinkett, Abel and Stabile; also Council Members Berman, Eisland, Fisher, Foster, Harrison, Koslowitz, O'Donovan, Povman, Robles and Rodriguez

Whereas, On April 1, 2001 an EP-3E Aries II reconnaissance plane based in Whidbey Island, Washington, left on a routine surveillance flight over international waters; and

Whereas, Although the plane never entered Chinese territorial waters, fighters were scrambled to meet the American plane; and

Whereas, In the subsequent engagement, one of the Chinese fighters collided with the EP-3E Aries II, resulting in the downing of both planes and the death of the Chinese pilot; and

Whereas, Though the damage inflicted by the crash seemed likely to result in a fatal crash for the EP-3E Aries II, the courage and skill of its crew, particularly its pilot, Lt. Shane Osborne, allowed the plane to land safely on Hainan Island; and

Whereas, Once on the ground, the entire 24 person crew of the plane was detained by the People's Republic of China for 11 days; and

Whereas, On April 12th, after intense, high-level negotiations between the United States and China, the crew was returned to American soil; and

Whereas, The 24 crew members are: Ensign Richard Bensing of Brandon, Fla.; Aviation Electrician's Mate 3rd Class Steven Blocher of Charlotte; Cryptologic Technician Seaman Bradford Borland; Aviation Electronics Technician Dave Michael Cecka; Lt. (j.g.) John Comerford of Palos Verdes Estates, Calif.; Cryptologic Technician Operator 1st Class Shawn Coursen of Valdosta, Ga.; Petty Officer Jeremy Crandall; Cryptologic Technician Interpretive 1st Class Josef Edmunds of Davis, Calif.; Cryptologic Technician Interpretive 2nd Class Brandon Funk of Showlow, Ariz.; Aviation Electronics Technician 2nd Class Scott Guidry of Satellite Beach, Fla.; Cryptologic Technician 2nd Class Jason Hanser of Billings, Mont.; Lt. Patrick Honeck of La Mesa, Calif.; Lt. (j.g.) Regina Kauffman of Warminster, Pa.; Aviation Machinist's Mate Senior Chief Nicholas Mellos.; Aviation Electronics Technician 2nd Class Ramon Mercado of Moreno Valley, Calif.; Lt. Shane Osborn of Norfolk, Neb.; Lt. (j.g.) Richard Payne; Cryptologic Technician 2nd Class Kenneth Richter of Staten Island, N.Y.; Lt. Marcia Sonon of Lenharstville, Pa.; Lt. (j.g.) Jeffrey Vignery of Goodland, Kan.; Aviation Machinist 2nd Class Wendy Westbrook of Rock Creek, Ohio, and Cryptologic Technician 3rd Class Rodney Young of Katy, Tex.; and

Whereas, Kenneth Richter is a resident of Staten Island, and represented his City and his country in an honorable and exemplary manner; and

Whereas, All of these individuals underwent a harrowing ordeal in the service of their nation; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York welcomes home from China the 24 members of the United States Armed Forces who made up the crew of the EP-3E Aries II surveillance plane downed over Hainan Island, especially Staten Island resident and Navy cryptographer Kenneth Richter.