RESOLUTION

By the Honorable Todd Spitzer, 71st Assembly District; and the Honorable Dick Ackerman, 33rd Senatorial District;Relative to commending

CHARLES RODRIGUEZ

WHEREAS, Throughout the course of American history, courageous men and women have taken up arms to secure, defend, and maintain the core principles upon which our nation's freedoms depend, and one such individual is Charles Rodriguez, who will be honored on November 4, 2005, for the heroism he displayed in his service to his country as a member of the United States Army during World War II; and

WHEREAS, Born in California on November 4, 1920, Charles Rodriguez was drafted into the United States Army in 1942, and, soon after basic training, volunteered to become a member of the infamous Merrill's Marauders during the China-Indochina-Burma campaign of 1943-1944; and

WHEREAS, Merrill's Marauders, a Ranger type outfit, came into existence as the result of the Quebec Conference of August 1943 to serve as a mountain ground unit to destroy Japanese communications and supply lines and, generally, play havoc with enemy forces while an attempt was made to reopen the Burma Road; and

WHEREAS, A Presidential call for "A Dangerous and Hazardous Mission" was issued, and approximately 2,900 American soldiers responded to the call, including Charles Rodriguez; and

WHEREAS, Officially designated as the 5307th Composite Unit ( Provisional) code name "CALAHAD" the unit later became popularly known as Merrill's Marauders, named after its leader, Brigadier General Frank Merrill; and

WHEREAS, Organized into combat teams, two to each battalion, the Marauder volunteers came from a variety of theaters of operation; and

WHEREAS, After preliminary training operations undertaken in great secrecy in the jungles of India, about 600 men were detached as a rear echelon to remain in India to handle the soon to be vital air drop link between the six Marauder combat teams and the Air Transport Command; and

WHEREAS, Colored red, White, Blue, Green, Orange, and Khaki, the remaining 240 Marauders began their march up the Ledo Road and over the onrushing ranges of the Himalayan Mountains into Burma; and

WHEREAS, The Marauders, with no tanks or heavy artillery to support them, walked over 1,000 miles through extremely dense and almost impenetrable jungles and came out with glory; and

WHEREAS, In 5 major and 30 minor engagements, they defeated the veteran soldiers of the Japanese 18th Division (compatriots of Singapore and Malaya) who vastly outnumbered them; and

WHEREAS, Always moving to the rear of the main forces of the Japanese, they completely disrupted enemy supply and communication lines, and disrupted and then behind the lines operations with the capture of Myitkina Airfield, the only all weather airfield in Burma; and

WHEREAS, For their accomplishments in Burma, the Marauders were awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation in July 1944, however, in November 1966, this was redesignated as the Presidential Unit Citation, which is awarded by the President in the name of Congress; and

WHEREAS, The unit was consolidated with the 475th Infantry on August 16, 1944, and on July 21, 1954, the 475th was redesignated the 75th Infantry, and it is from the redesignation of Merrill's Marauders into the 75th Infantry Regiment that the modern-day 75th Ranger Regiment traces its current designation; and

WHEREAS, Through his service with Merrill's Marauders, Charles Rodriguez has brought great credit to himself and immense pride to his wife of 55 years, Margaret, and their 9 children, 12 grandchildren, and 16 great grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Through his meritorious service as a member of Merrill's Marauders, Charles Rodriguez has served as an inspiration for all those who aspire to excellence in the defense of their country; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED by ASSEMBLY MEMBER TODD SPITZER AND SENATOR DICK ACKERMAN, That they take great pleasure in expressing their sincere appreciation to Charles Rodriguez for his dedicated and faithful service to the United States of America and the State of California, and convey to him best wishes for every happiness in the future.

Members Resolution No 3007
Dated this 4th day of November, 2005