

SJR63 INTRODUCED



1 SJR63
2 MMZ6WWW-1
3 By Senators Shelnutt, Roberts
4 RFD:
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SJR___ CELEBRATING WILLIAM EDWARD COWDEN ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY.

WHEREAS, with special pleasure, we offer joyful felicitations to United States Navy Veteran William Edward "Ed" Cowden, who is celebrating his milestone 100th birthday; and

WHEREAS, Ed Cowden was born on May 8, 1924, to Harold and Zettie Cowden in Irvine, Texas, the third of six children; in 1934, the Cowden family moved to Harold Cowden's original family homestead near Remlap, Alabama, where generations of Cowdens had settled since the early 1800s; and

WHEREAS, Ed graduated from Blount County High School in 1942 and began working with his father at Blair Construction in Birmingham and learned the skills of carpentry and homebuilding; and

WHEREAS, in 1943, during World War II, Ed Cowden enlisted in the United States Navy; he was assigned to a Carrier Aircraft Service Unit in Oregon where he served as a parachute rigger and trained with the 151 Bomb Squadron as a rear gunner on an SB2C Helldiver bomber aircraft; he honorably discharged from the Navy in 1945 and returned to the Cowden Homestead where he resumed work in the construction industry; and



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29 WHEREAS, Ed married his childhood sweetheart, Evelyn
30 Harrell in 1948, and shortly thereafter he re-enlisted in
31 the Navy serving at the small Naval installation at the
32 Birmingham Airport; he was transferred to Jacksonville,
33 Florida, in 1956, and in 1963 he promoted to the rank of
34 Senior Chief Petty Officer; also while in Jacksonville, he
35 and his wife were blessed with two sons, Jeff and Norman;
36 and

37 WHEREAS, in 1964, Ed Cowden was transferred to
38 Andrews Air Force Base outside of Washington, D.C., to
39 assume his new role as Senior Chief Petty Officer; in 1966,
40 he retired from active duty and moved with his family to
41 Pinson, Alabama; and

42 WHEREAS, Ed returned to the construction business and
43 began working with his younger brother, John Cowden; later,
44 he established the Ed Cowden Construction Company and
45 manufactured large metal buildings for truck terminals; and

46 WHEREAS, Ed Cowden has been a devout member of the
47 Palmerdale Methodist Church for over 60 years; in 1976, he
48 attended the Methodist Conference meetings at Lake
49 Junaluska, North Carolina, to learn how to manage and lead
50 foreign mission projects; he became a major leader in
51 launching global foreign mission projects for the North
52 Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church, which at
53 that time had over 100 contributing churches in North
54 Alabama; and

55 WHEREAS, Mr. Cowden, along with Palmerdale Methodist
56 Church, has lead mission projects to Bolivia, Chile,



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57 Nigeria, and Haiti; in 1977, he led a work team to a remote
58 village in Haiti where they built a church and later founded
59 a school that is still in operation today; and

60 WHEREAS, as Ed Cowden draws close to his 100th
61 birthday, he remains very active; he does daily exercises,
62 rides his bikes, and serves in his church doing various
63 projects; he has also started a local mission program called
64 Carpenters for Christ where they build decks for people in
65 need in the local community; and

66 WHEREAS, Ed Cowden has been blessed to live a long,
67 full life; he and his wife, Evelyn, were happily married for
68 68 years until her passing in 2017; together they raised two
69 sons, and now his family has expanded to include two
70 daughters-in-law, three granddaughters, one great-grandson,
71 and two great-granddaughters; and

72 WHEREAS, a 100th Birthday is a significant milestone
73 that represents a century worth of wisdom earned and
74 memories gained and is a cause for great rejoicing; it is a
75 tremendous privilege to recognize a remarkable man such as
76 Ed Cowden on his special day; now therefore,

77 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
78 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That centenarian, William Edward
79 Cowden, is highly honored and commended, and this resolution
80 is offered to him in highest tribute, as well as with
81 sincere best wishes for continued prosperity and blessings.