



Executive Department
State of Idaho

The Office of the Governor
Proclamation

State Capitol
Boise

WHEREAS, Joe Goicoechea, 95, a first-generation American and a pillar of Boise's Basque community who was raised in Barber and Boise, passed away at the Boise VA Medical Center at 9 p.m. on December 30, 2016; and

WHEREAS, Joe Goicoechea, a patriot with an unflinching love for his family and county, and who as a child worked tirelessly during the Great Depression to help support his family, joined the Idaho National Guard's 116th Cavalry Brigade when he was only 17 years old; and

WHEREAS, as a civilian contractor employed by Morrison-Knudsen, Joe Goicoechea volunteered as a battlefield enlistee during World War II, joining the U.S. Navy in defending against the Imperial Japanese Navy's attack on Wake Island on December 8, 1941, just hours after its surprise attack on Pearl Harbor; and

WHEREAS, Joe Goicoechea, having laid down his shovel and taken up arms against a numerically superior force, and despite being seriously injured, fought valiantly and bravely alongside his brothers in arms, repelling the first invasion of Japanese forces on December 11th and courageously denying the aggressors what they assumed would be an easy victory; and

WHEREAS, after a 15-day siege and bombardment that resulted in 81 U.S. Marines, eight sailors, and 82 U.S. civilian contractors being either killed or wounded, the U.S. contingent destroyed its remaining armaments and surrendered to the Japanese, but only after making the enemy pay the price of 21 aircraft shot down and almost 1,000 soldiers killed; and

WHEREAS, as a prisoner of war, Joe Goicoechea survived the initial Japanese execution of Wake Island combatants and was brutally beaten, tortured, starved and forced into slave labor in the factories of Japan, but during those 46 months of inhumane captivity he persevered while many of his comrades died of dysentery and disease, never surrendering his spirit and faith in God to his captors; and

WHEREAS, at the conclusion of World War II, Joe Goicoechea was liberated by allied troops and recognized for his distinguished service by the United States of America with the World War II Victory Medal, the Asia-Pacific Campaign Medal, the American Campaign Medal and the Purple Heart Medal; and

WHEREAS, Joe Goicoechea returned to his beloved home state of Idaho after the war, married, raised a family of five children and worked as an iron worker and construction superintendent, helping to build many of the iconic landmarks that now shape Boise's skyline;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER, Governor of the State of Idaho, in recognition of Joe Goicoechea's service to the United States of America in defense of the precious freedoms we hold so dear, indelible contributions to the City of Boise and State of Idaho and leadership in Boise's Basque community, do hereby proclaim January 12, 2017 to be

JOE GOICOECHEA DAY

in Idaho.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Idaho at the Capitol in Boise on this 12th day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand and seventeen and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred forty-first and of the Statehood of Idaho the one hundred twenty-seventh.

C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER
GOVERNOR

LAWRENCE DENNEY
SECRETARY OF STATE