

# NATIONAL AIRBORNE DAY

WHEREAS: On August 16, 1940, the original Parachute Test Platoon, under the leadership of Major William Lee, performed the first Army parachute jump at Fort Benning, Georgia; and

WHEREAS: The Parachute Test Platoon pioneered methods of combat jumping that established Airborne forces as a key component of American military strategy; and

WHEREAS: During World War II, Airborne tactics were crucial to the success of important missions, including the D-Day invasion at Normandy, the Battle of the Bulge, the invasion of Southern France, and many others; and

WHEREAS: In Korea and Vietnam, Airborne soldiers played a critical combat role that continued in later conflicts and peacekeeping operations, including Panama, Grenada, Desert Storm, Haiti, Somalia, the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq; and

WHEREAS: The elite Airborne units owing their lineage to the brave men of the Parachute Test Platoon include the 82nd Airborne Division, "America's Guard of Honor," and the "Screaming Eagles" of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault); paratroopers in the Army's XVIII Airborne Corps, the 75th Infantry (Ranger) Regiment and other Special Forces units; and the former 11th, 13th and 17th Airborne Divisions and numerous other Airborne, glider and air assault units and regiments; and

WHEREAS: Airborne combat continues to be driven by the bravery and daring spirit of sky soldiers whose enduring reputation for dedication, excellence and honor reflects the legacy of the original Parachute Test Platoon; now

THEREFORE: I, SONNY PERDUE, Governor of the State of Georgia, do hereby proclaim August 16, 2003 as NATIONAL AIRBORNE DAY in Georgia and call upon all Georgians to join me in honoring the thousands of soldiers, past and present, who have served in an Airborne capacity.

In witness thereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Executive Department to be affixed this 8<sup>th</sup> day of August in the year of our Lord two thousand three.