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H. CON. RES. 90

Recognizing the dedication and honorable service of members of the Armed Forces who are serving or have served as military nurses.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 12, 2007

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (for herself, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. McCOTTER) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Recognizing the dedication and honorable service of members of the Armed Forces who are serving or have served as military nurses.

Whereas military nurses have served as bright examples in leadership, courage, and service before self, with their service to the United States beginning on the battlefields of the American Revolution, when women serving as nurses tended to the sick and wounded;

Whereas during the Civil War, more than 5,000 women served as nurses, under the leadership of such legendary figures as Clara Barton and Dorothea Dix, and these nurses dramatically advanced patient care and profoundly transformed military nursing;

Whereas nurses staffed government and regimental hospitals of both the Union and Confederacy and provided care at the front lines, and their service saved lives and cemented the importance of nurses in post-war professional medicine;

Whereas over 1,500 nurses served with the Army during the Spanish-American War in Hawaii, Cuba, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico, on the hospital ship Relief, and in State-side hospitals, and their nursing skills so lowered mortality rates that the Army and Navy were inspired to create official uniformed nursing corps;

Whereas Dita Kinney, a former contract nurse, became the first Superintendent of the Army Nurse Corps in 1901, and Esther Voorhees Hasson, one of the nurses on the hospital ship Relief during the war, became the first Superintendent of the Navy Nurse Corps in 1908;

Whereas the first uniformed women to go overseas during World War I were military nurses who served without rank and without the pay and benefits of other military members, but they nevertheless served on the battlefields of that war, and, ultimately, more than 23,000 Army and Navy nurses proudly served during that war, including 400 nurses who died in the line of duty;

Whereas approximately 70,000 Army and Navy nurses served during World War II, providing care as officers with “relative rank” in every theater of war, on the seas and in the skies, and military nurses accompanied invasion forces setting up hospitals and carrying for the sick and wounded;

Whereas approximately 239 Army and Navy nurses died in the line of duty during World War II, and 83 military nurses became prisoners of war;

Whereas many women supported the war effort during World War II by joining the Public Health Service, working hand-in-hand with the military, and nursing care was so vital that the Government formed the Cadet Nurse Corps and trained approximately 124,000 women as nurses;

Whereas by 1945, the fear of a nurse shortage was so great that the President requested a nurse draft, and the resulting bill passed the House of Representatives, but the war ended in Europe before it was considered by the Senate;

Whereas, while it was always understood that nurses would be a part of the military, their status as commissioned officers in the Army and Navy was formalized in 1947 with the Army-Navy Nurse Act, and, when the Air Force was established following the war, its Nurse Corps was soon created;

Whereas during the Korean War, hundreds of military nurses were quickly deployed to the battle theater with Army nurses serving close to the front lines, Navy nurses aboard hospital ships offshore, and Air Force nurses on medical evacuation flights;

Whereas 17 military nurses died in the line of duty during the Korean War, and more than 10,200 military nurses served during the Korean War, caring for the sick and wounded overseas and members of the Armed Forces and their families in the United States;

Whereas nearly 6,000 American military nurses served in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War, assigned to

military hospitals, air evacuation units, hospital ships, and field units;

Whereas some of these military nurses were wounded and eight died in the line of duty, one as a result of enemy fire, and the eight nurses are memorialized on the wall at the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial;

Whereas on November 8, 1967, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed Public Law 90-130, which removed the limitations on the promotion of female members of the Armed Forces that had kept women out of the general and flag officer ranks, and in 1970, the first woman ever to be promoted in the Armed Forces to general officer was a nurse, Anna Mae Hayes;

Whereas in 1979, another Army nurse became the first African-American women general officer in the history of the Armed Forces, and each of the military services now has at least one nurse who is a general or flag officer;

Whereas American military nurses were deployed for Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm and have supported United States military operations in Grenada, Panama, Honduras, Bosnia, Croatia, Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, and the Middle East;

Whereas as of today, military nurses serve across the spectrum of military medicine, from commanding hospitals to serving in field operating rooms, on hospital ships and medical evacuation aircraft, and in family practice clinics, psychiatric wards, and research facilities, literally everywhere military medicine is needed by the Armed Forces;

Whereas hundreds of military nurses are serving currently in locations around the world, including Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Europe, and the Far East, and military nurses

persevere in providing outstanding healthcare in a dangerous world;

Whereas terrorist organizations continue to challenge the peace and security of the United States, and natural disasters have taken a huge toll in death and devastation, but military nurses are trained, well equipped, and ready to respond anytime, anywhere at the call of their country;

Whereas military nurses provide the world's best healthcare services to wounded soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen and Coast Guardsmen, and are saving the lives of people with injuries that would have been fatal in earlier wars;;

Whereas during World War I, 8.1 percent of the wounded died of their wounds, but now lifesaving medical capability is closer to the battlefield than ever before, and in Iraq only 1.4 percent of the wounded die of their wounds; and

Whereas the synergy of advanced nursing practice, combining aeromedical evacuation crews with critical care air transport, additional high-technology equipment, advances in pain management, and more extensive nurse training has enabled the Armed Forces the opportunity to transport more critically ill patients than ever before: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
 2 *concurring)*, That Congress acknowledges and recognizes
 3 the dedication and significant contributions of all members
 4 of the Armed Forces, especially members who are serving
 5 or have served as military nurses, and supports programs
 6 to strengthen and increase the nursing workforce.

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