

Due to changes in the way health care is delivered, the VA has consolidated its health care in the central part of this large campus in Dublin. However, it continues to spend hundreds of hours and tens of thousands of dollars each year to maintain vacant buildings and grounds on this campus.

The State of Georgia has identified two uses for part of this campus. One part would be used to expand the Middle Georgia College, a State-run institution of higher learning. The other would be used by the State to expand mental health services to residents in the Dublin area.

In addition to ridding itself of the annual maintenance costs, the VA would receive services for veterans and employees from these State-sponsored institutions.

I urge my colleagues to support the passage of H.R. 5139.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5139. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD) has brought forth a measure that is a good deal for the VA, a good deal for veterans, and a great deal for the State of Georgia. It will allow the VA to gain the benefit from two parcels of land which are no longer needed.

The first parcel will be conveyed to the State Board of Regents to expand Middle Georgia College. The second will go to Middle Georgia's Community Service Board to provide mental health services.

In addition to helping the VA in the cost of maintaining unnecessary grounds and obsolete buildings, the State will also assume the cost of remediation of hazardous materials. In exchange, the VA will be able to provide veterans and its employees with some good new benefits.

Middle Georgia College will provide free tuition and fees to employees, their spouses, and dependents, and to any veteran receiving treatment at the Dublin VA Medical Center. It also offers the VA priority consideration to offer the Board of Regents maintenance and food services. This may allow the VA to develop new funding streams that will allow improved health care services for veterans.

I am pleased to lend my support for this measure, and ask my colleagues to join with me in giving it favorable consideration.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD), the author of the bill, to provide further details on H.R. 5139.

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin my remarks today by thanking my col-

leagues who have been very helpful in bringing this bill to the floor on the suspension calendar.

The gentleman from Arizona (Chairman STUMP) and the ranking member, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, have been very helpful to us on this. I thank them and their staffs.

As has been pointed out, Mr. Speaker, this bill provides for the conveyance of property from the Carl Vinson VA Medical Center in Dublin, Georgia, to Middle Georgia College and the Community Service Board of Middle Georgia.

There are many benefits with this transfer of land. The VA obviously is going to be able to save on the cost of renovating several rundown old buildings, as well as the maintenance and upkeep costs on those buildings.

The VA Center employees and patients are going to receive free tuition and fees to the Middle Georgia College, and free mental health counseling at a mental health facility that will occupy one of these buildings that is being transferred.

Probably one of the most important features of this entire bill is that that property that will be transferred to the university system of the State of Georgia is going to be used to build a nursing treatment facility there.

Now, in Middle Georgia it is absolutely a wonderful quality of life, but it is rural Georgia, and they have a very hard time competing for nurses, for example, with the Medical College of Georgia in Augusta and Atlanta, Georgia. This is going to give us a nursing facility right next to the hospital, which is so desperately needed at this particular VA hospital.

In addition to that, and I am very pleased about this, this is a perfect example of the government and private citizens working together to improve the quality of life for all of our citizens.

Part of this property goes to the Community Services Board, and the private citizens of Lawrence County, Dublin, Georgia, have raised over half a million dollars already to renovate one of the buildings that will be used for mental health, which later, after it is finished and completed, will be used for our veterans or their employees. Any of them that need any of these facilities, it will be made available to them.

So I am proud of the people of Lawrence County because they are going to work to do their part to raise the private funds to restore these buildings that at the present time are frankly draining the VA Treasury, and are not helping one veteran in Dublin, Georgia.

This move is going to help a great number of veterans by increasing our nursing staff, by making facilities available to those veterans.

So again, let me thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), the

gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP), and all who have been involved. I encourage each of my colleagues to let us please pass this and let these folks down in Dublin, Georgia, improve the VA Center and improve their mental health and improve their nursing facilities.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) for his concurrence in considering this legislation in such a timely manner. I would also like to commend the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD) for all his work on this measure, and for pursuing a new and creative use of VA property to benefit both veterans and the low-income.

□ 1030

This is a bipartisan measure, and I urge all Members to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BASS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5139.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### HONOR GUARD FOR VETERANS EMPOWERMENT ACT

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 284) to amend title 38, United States Code, to require employers to give employees who are members of a reserve component a leave of absence for participation in honor guard for a funeral of a veteran, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. R. 284

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Honor Guard for Veterans Empowerment Act".

#### SEC. 2. EMPLOYERS REQUIRED TO GRANT LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR EMPLOYEES TO PARTICIPATE IN HONOR GUARDS FOR FUNERALS OF VETERANS.

(a) DEFINITION OF SERVICE IN THE UNIFORMED SERVICES.—Section 4303(13) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking "and" after "National Guard duty"; and

(2) by inserting before the period at the end "and a period for which a person is absent from employment for the purpose of performing funeral honors duty as authorized by section 12503 of title 10 or section 115 of title 32."

(b) REQUIRED LEAVE OF ABSENCE.—Section 4316 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(e)(1) An employer shall grant an employee who is a member of a reserve component an authorized leave of absence from a position of employment to allow that employee to perform funeral honors duty as authorized by section 12503 of title 10 or section 115 of title 32.

“(2) For purposes of section 4312(e)(1) of this title, an employee who takes an authorized leave of absence under paragraph (1) is deemed to have notified the employer of the employee's intent to return to such position of employment.”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsections (a) and (b) shall take effect 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP).

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 284, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 284 would require employers to give employees who are a member of a reserve component a leave of absence for participation in an honor guard for the funeral of a veteran.

Mr. Speaker, there has been substantial progress made over the last several years towards making military honors available for funerals of veterans. The plan adopted recently by the Department of Defense envisions that reservists and guardsmen will perform a substantial part of this important funeral duty. Under existing law, a reservist is entitled to job protection for absences due to military obligations. This bill would simply clarify that performing funerals is treated like any other military obligation for purposes of the law which provide reservists job protection.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY) for his leadership on this important legislation on behalf of the Nation's veterans and their family. As one of the House authors of the law that mandated standards for honor guard participation in the funerals of veterans, I believe this bill will help our Nation live up to its commitment to those veterans.

Mr. Speaker, the bill would amend title 38, U.S. Code, to require employers to give employees who are members of the ready reserve a leave of absence to participate in honor guard funerals for veterans.

It is sad when a veteran of the armed services dies. Often his or her family wants a simple honor guard to accompany that service. It is sadder still when no such honor guard can be provided.

This bill would make provisions for such an honor guard without requiring the Department of Defense to send active-duty personnel for the task. Members of the reserve components, veterans themselves, can volunteer to provide those honors.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 284 is a bipartisan effort to honor our Nation's veterans and their families for their sacrifices. I strongly support H.R. 284, as amended, and urge my colleagues to approve this important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY), the author of H.R. 284, for further explanation.

Mr. SWEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arizona (Chairman STUMP) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to support H.R. 284, the Honor Guard for Veterans Empowerment Act.

First, I want to give my heartfelt thanks to the gentleman from Arizona (Chairman STUMP). I know it was his great efforts that got this bill to the floor today on suspension, and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), ranking member, for all of their work in assisting me to bring this legislation to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 284 codifies the performance of voluntary inactive-duty funeral honors by reserve component members as protected under title 38, chapter 43 of the United States Code.

H.R. 284 makes sense because it clarifies current law. It protects members of our reserve forces. It educates employers and requires no government spending. Finally, it supports our Nation's veterans.

Mr. Speaker, we know that our veteran population is growing older. We know that more of these heroes are beginning to pass away. The Department of Veterans Affairs expects the annual veteran death rate to peak at 614,000 in the year 2008. That averages out to about 1,700 veterans' funerals each day by the year 2008.

Mr. Speaker, with this trend comes increasing requests by veterans and their families for military honors at funerals. The Department of Defense estimates these funeral requests could reach anywhere from 270,000 to 465,000 per year by 2008.

Coupled with the increasing death rate, there has also been a shrinking of our active duty military forces. The active duty military has declined by 1.4 million today, a 35 percent decrease from 1989.

Active duty forces are just not available in sufficient quantity to perform the enormous number of military honor funerals which are being anticipated to occur over the next several years. That is why we introduced H.R. 284.

This year, the Department of Defense, as well, implemented new policies on military honor funerals, Mr. Speaker. At a minimum, the military now must send two service members, a flag, a recording of Taps to be played at each veterans funeral service. At least one of the two-member honor guard must be from the service of the deceased veteran.

The combination of an increased veteran death rate and reduction in active duty forces has placed us in a troubling situation. We have committed support to our veterans, yet appear not to have the active duty forces to provide adequate funeral honors for veterans who deserve it.

As a result, the Department of Defense is increasingly turning to its reserve component to assist with the performance of these honored burial duties. In fact, it is hard to imagine how the new burial policies would succeed without the enthusiastic support and participation of reservists.

Mr. Speaker, the ready reservists represent a quality force of nearly 1.3 million soldiers, sailors, and airmen who can assist with the performance of honor guard duty at a veteran's funeral.

The Department of Defense is developing a statistical program to track the number of funeral honors performed by the service. That information is currently unknown, but I can tell my colleagues those numbers will grow rapidly in the next several years.

Current defense policy allows reservists to receive a \$50 stipend, one retirement point, and travel reimbursement for expenses if they travel over 50 miles from home during the performance of the funeral duties for a veteran.

These soldiers are placed on inactive duty status and perform a function on a voluntary basis without a full day's pay, primarily out of patriotism, Mr. Speaker, and respect for our veteran population.

The compensation they receive, I should point out, is hardly enough to risk losing a full-time civilian job should their employer balk at the prospect of the service member missing a day of work. H.R. 284 addresses that potential service member-employer situation.

H.R. 284 clarifies title 38, United States Code, chapter 43 regarding employment and reemployment rights of members of the uniformed services by ensuring reserve component members performing voluntary inactive-duty funeral honors duty are protected.

This bill provides an additional incentive for reserve component members to perform burial service duty and

educates employers about the reservists' vital role in these funerals.

Before closing, let me briefly mention the amendments to the version of H.R. 284 which is before us today.

After substantial discussion with the Department of Defense and the Department of Labor, it was determined that two technical corrections were necessary to fine-tune this legislation. Based on the Department's recommendations, we have inserted the leave of absence language and specific duty authorization language into section 4303, subsection 13 of title 38, as well as section 4312. These changes help clarify title 38.

H.R. 284 makes sense, Mr. Speaker, because it clarifies current law, protects members of our reserve forces, educates employers, creates no new government spending, and supports our Nation's veterans. I ask my colleagues to support its passage.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I again want to give my substantial thanks to the gentleman from Arizona (Chairman STUMP) and to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), ranking member, for assisting me in bringing this legislation to the floor. I would also like to thank the members of the committee for moving on this. Finally, I would like to thank the over 100 members who cosponsored this important legislation.

The Honor Guard for Veterans Empowerment Act is an important effort to protect the reserve component service members, educate and motivate employers, and support our veteran population.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SANCHEZ).

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I cannot tell my colleagues how many times I have received a phone call to my office from somebody whose father or brother or sister are now deceased, who have been a veteran, and the phone call has usually been about trying to get an honor guard to the funeral.

Usually they are distraught because, of course, when we go through something like that, especially for someone who has served with honor in the military, and not to be able to have an honor guard at their funeral seems unjust. And, in fact, it is.

In the year 2000 Defense authorization bill, we actually wrote legislation, we wrote some words that talked about each and every veteran having an honor guard at their funeral. Well, that is because it is a promise that we made. It is something for our country to uphold.

But due to the large and aging population of World War II and Korean veterans, we anticipate about 600,000 funerals this year. What that means is, as we have cut back on our current service personnel, and as we send them

around the world, we have fewer and fewer of them around to help with that duty at funerals. So we have begun to rely on our reservists to help with this. The more the reservists go out to conduct that, the more time actually they have to spend away from their employment.

So this is really a resolution to let employers know how important it is for our reservists to take the time to go and honor the commitment that this Nation has made. It is important for us to explain to employers. It is important for Americans to understand that we are trying to hold to that commitment. It is important that, when duty calls, reservists do not jeopardize their jobs.

This Nation and this Congress must stand behind our reservists. That is why I would ask my fellow colleagues to approve House Resolution 284, because it is a reaffirmation of great honor to those who have served with honor to our country. Congress reaffirms that; and when we do that, America reaffirms the work that these veterans have done.

I support this bill, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill also.

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. QUINN), the chairman of our Subcommittee on Benefits.

Mr. QUINN. Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) for their normal bipartisan approach to this issue here this morning, as we always approach these issues in the Committee on Veterans Affairs in the Congress.

Also, besides thanking the gentleman from Arizona and the gentleman from Illinois, it is an opportunity for me to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY) from the Saratoga region of New York, who just opened, by the way, a brand-new national cemetery in Saratoga, New York, Mr. Speaker, this past year, and understands clearly what it is about to pay tribute to veterans who have served their country.

So I join in support from the Subcommittee on Benefits' perspective to support H.R. 284 this morning, the Honor Guard for Veterans Empowerment Act, and also urge all of our colleagues later today to vote in the affirmative on this.

In the Subcommittee on Benefits, Mr. Speaker, we have had opportunity this past year or two to visit this whole discussion of burial for our veterans. It is interesting to me when we have an opportunity, and just last year a number of us traveled over to Arlington to view right here in D.C. and over in Arlington, Virginia, the situation for burials in the columbarium as well as full burial service.

It is interesting for us to see on the committee the support we get when we bring bills like this to the floor and the support that we need during the course of the year to make certain that we budget the kind of money, the kind of personnel that would be necessary to make certain when we have an opportunity that we treat our veterans the way they should be treated, with dignity and with honor.

□ 1045

That is why the gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY) has really hit the mark this morning with a common sense approach to this issue. He understands what that means, and we all owe him a debt of gratitude.

It is also an opportunity for me to just take a few brief moments this morning to talk about other work on the subcommittee. We, from time to time, debate here on the floor, and certainly back in our district, I know in Buffalo, New York and Saratoga, New York and Arizona and Illinois and other places have a chance to discuss whether or not we are meeting the needs of our veterans when it comes to health care, for example; when it comes to education benefits for our veterans; when it comes to housing benefits; or whether or not we are discussing the important issue of homelessness among our veterans.

Fully one-third of the homeless people in this country are veterans. So we will agree to disagree sometimes about whether or not we have full funding or adequate funding for health coverage, for education benefits, for housing benefits for the homeless veterans, but when it comes to burial, when it comes time, as the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SANCHEZ) just pointed out a few moments ago, to talk about the family that remains after a veteran passes on, we really need to step up to the plate and make certain that these veterans and their families are given the honor and dignity that they deserve.

The gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY) brings us a bill this morning that does exactly that and, at the same time, makes certain that our reservists are also given the opportunities that they need to protect the job back home, and to make certain that they have done what they have done for their families at the right time and place.

H.R. 284, then, is that bipartisan approach that we talk about so often here in the House of Representatives. I am happy to join, and my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILLNER), the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Benefits, joins me this morning and all others in supporting H.R. 284. This is common sense approach to making certain that dignity and honor is afforded to the veterans in our country.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP), and the ranking member, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), as well as the gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY).

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I want to thank again the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), the ranking member, and the gentleman from New York (Mr. QUINN), the chairman of the subcommittee, as well as the ranking member of that subcommittee for all their work in bringing this to the floor.

I also want to commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY) for all the hard work he has done and for sponsoring this bill, as the chief sponsor.

Mr. Speaker, this may be the last bill the Committee on Veterans' Affairs brings to the House floor under suspension, and I believe we can be very proud of the legislative achievements we have passed in the House during this last 106th Congress. From health care, to disability compensation and national cemetery issues, the House has maintained its bipartisan tradition. By working together, with the best interest of veterans in mind, and putting partisan politics aside, Congress has improved the lives of veterans and their families throughout the Nation.

I want to express my appreciation to the leadership of this House, to the members of the committee, and especially to the chairmen of the subcommittees and their ranking members. And I want to single out and offer a special note of thanks to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), the ranking Democrat of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, for all his work and for the legislation that we have been able to enact. He and his staff have been truly great to work with this year, as well as previous years. He is thoroughly committed to improving the lives of veterans; and due to his contributions to the legislative process, we have improved our work products immensely.

I want to acknowledge the contribution of the majority staff for this committee's work. Staff plays a key role in getting bills enacted, and it is important to recognize the contribution they make to the legislative process, and I thank them all for the work that they have done this year. That said, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 284.

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, as a cosponsor of H.R. 284, to support this measure, the "Honor Guard for Veterans Empowerment Act." This bill does a tremendous service to the men and women who so honorably served our country to preserve the freedom and prosperity we enjoy today. There is

no doubt that those women and men deserve to have an Honor Guard funeral on their burial day. The Honor Guard for Veterans Empowerment Act is a critical piece in fulfilling this country's obligation to our Veteran community.

As the member who represents Congressman Sonny Montgomery's district I am proud to continue his legacy as a defender of our Veterans' rights. I believe this legislation continues the work he left in defending and honoring those who served this country in the time of greatest need.

I strongly support the Defense Departments January 1st, 2000 decision, ensuring that all veterans desiring a military funeral will have the opportunity. This legislation makes that commitment viable. H.R. 284 responds to the 21% growth in request for an honor guard funeral. It is critical that we have the resources to provide the greatest generation with the honor they are due on the day they are laid to rest.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support H.R. 284, which will allow Reservists to serve at military funerals by granting them the necessary release of time from their civilian jobs. Active military personnel are shrinking in numbers and the number of funerals performed are rising each year. Add to this the new policy adopted by the Department of Defense ensuring that all veterans receive a proper military honor funeral, and we must call upon the Reservists to perform occasionally in this capacity. These people should be supported for their willingness to serve this function and this bill will protect them in regard to their civilian employers. For these reasons I urge passage of this important bill.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 284, the Honor Guard for Veterans Empowerment Act. I urge my colleagues to join in supporting this urgently needed legislation.

H.R. 284 sets in statute language protecting the performance of voluntary inactive-duty funeral honors by Reserve component members. This is an important development in light of the increase in military funerals over the past 2 years.

Last year the Congress passed legislation requiring the Department of Defense to provide personnel for military funerals whenever an eligible veteran's family made such a request. However, manpower shortages in our active duty forces have made fulfillment of this task problematic.

Moreover, the number of requests by veterans and their families for military honors at funerals is on the rise. During the first 6 months of 2000, the number of such requests was 21 percent higher over the same period in the previous year.

As a result of these two factors, the Department of Defense has had to place an increasing reliance on its Reserve components for the performance of their duties. Yet current regulations do not reflect this reality, offering small compensation to the Reservist in exchange for the possible loss of a full-time job.

H.R. 284 protects Reservists by ensuring the performance of voluntary inactive-duty funeral honors by Reserve component members is protected under title 38, United States Code, chapter 43. It also offers additional incentives to reservists for the performing of

these duties, and educates employers about the vital role played by reservists in veterans funerals.

Mr. Speaker, since this legislation is desperately needed, I urge my colleagues to lend it their wholehearted support.

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BASS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 284, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for approximately 10 minutes.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 53 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess for approximately 10 minutes.

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□ 1101

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PEASE) at 11 o'clock and 1 minute a.m.

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#### SENSE OF HOUSE REGARDING FIGHT AGAINST BREAST CANCER

Mr. COBURN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 278) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the importance of education, early detection and treatment, and other efforts in the fight against breast cancer.

The Clerk read as follows:

#### H. RES. 278

Whereas an estimated 175,000 women and 1,300 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer in 1999, and an estimated 43,300 women and 400 men will die of the disease;

Whereas breast cancer is the most common form of cancer among women, excluding skin cancers;

Whereas breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death among all women and the leading cause of cancer death among women between ages 40 and 55;

Whereas breast cancer can often be treated most successfully if detected early on;

Whereas education, regular clinical and self-examinations, regular mammograms, and biopsies (when appropriate) are critical to detecting and treating breast cancer in a timely manner;

Whereas the American Cancer Society recommends that all women aged 40 and over have annual screening mammograms and clinical breast examinations by health professionals, that women aged 20 to 39 have clinical examinations every three years, and