

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 36) expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the blue star service banner and the gold star.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DASCHLE. Madam President, today I join with my colleague, Senator HAGEL, to urge adoption of a Senate concurrent resolution on behalf of our troops and their families. Specifically, the resolution encourages families of military personnel to display the Blue Star Service Banner, a tradition dating back to World War I. The Blue Star Service Banner indicates that a loved one is serving our country in the active duty military, and honors their devotion and sacrifice.

The Blue Star Service Banner has its origins in World War I, when mothers of soldiers often sewed blue stars onto white flags by hand, in order to express their love, pride, and concern for their sons serving abroad. The practice was widespread throughout the two World Wars, coming to serve not only as a symbol of pride but also as a reminder to our Nation's citizens of their call to support the war effort. The flying flag urged civilians to remember their commitment to ration gas and food, to buy war bonds, or to work in the factories producing much-needed materials, all in support of the brave men who were placing their lives on the line in defense of our country.

Today, as a new generation of brave men and women faces grave personal risk on the front lines of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, let us renew this time-honored tradition and again hoist flags in support of our troops. Let the families of these men and women display their love, pride, and concern for their loved ones, who have made such tremendous commitments to our country. And let these flags remind American citizens of the ways we can support our troops' efforts abroad: by expressing our gratitude, by making personal sacrifices through donations or volunteer efforts, and by continuing to demonstrate liberty and democracy to the world through vigorous debate and civic participation in the institutions that make our country great.

Our Nation's active-duty military now consists of more than a million men and women, supported by even more families and households, and I introduce this bill today out of respect and solidarity with them all. In particular, I would like to pay tribute to my colleague from South Dakota, Senator TIM JOHNSON, who is Congress' only "Blue Star Parent." As you might imagine, given our relationship, I am particularly well acquainted with this family and their son, Brooks, a sergeant in the Army's 101st Airborne Division, now engaged in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Thank you, Barbara and TIM JOHNSON, and thank you, Brooks, for your contribution to our nation's security.

As images of the conflict in Iraq fill up our television screens and newspapers, many Americans feel helpless and distant, and we long for a way to support our troops. The Blue Star Service Banner allows military families to demonstrate their support, their pride, and their concern for the young men and women who serve our nation with such dedication. I urge you to support the passage of this important resolution and to join with me in calling upon the military families among your constituents to fly the Blue Star flag high and proudly.

Mr. SUNUNU. I ask unanimous consent the concurrent resolution and preamble be agreed to en bloc, the motions to reconsider be laid on the table en bloc, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 36) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. CON. RES. 36

Whereas the Blue Star Service Banner was patented and designed in 1917, during the height of the First World War, by Army Captain Robert L. Queissner of the 5th Ohio Infantry, who had two sons serving on the front lines;

Whereas the banner quickly became the symbol for a family member serving the Nation and families began proudly displaying these banners in their front windows during the First World War;

Whereas each Blue Star on the banner represents a family member serving in the Armed Services and symbolizes hope and pride;

Whereas beginning in 1918, the Blue Star would signify the living, and a smaller Gold Star would be placed on top of the Blue Star, forming a blue border, if the family member was killed or died while on active duty, to symbolize his or her sacrifice for the cause of freedom;

Whereas the placement of a Gold Star on top of a Blue Star recognizes that those who served together and came home, as well as their families, will always remember the sacrifice of those who died and honor their families;

Whereas the banners were displayed widely during the Second World War;

Whereas many of the banners displayed during the First and Second World Wars were hand-made by the mothers of those serving in the Armed Forces;

Whereas the legacy of the banner continued during the Korean, Vietnam, and Persian Gulf Wars and other periods of conflict, as well as in times of peace;

Whereas the Blue Star Service Banner is the official banner authorized by law to be displayed in honor of a family member serving the United States, while the Gold Star may be displayed in honor of a family member who has made the ultimate sacrifice for the Nation;

Whereas for over 85 years, families have proudly displayed the Blue Star Service Banner showing service men and women the honor and pride that is taken in their sacrifices for freedom;

Whereas the banner may be displayed by members of the immediate family of a loved one serving in the Armed Forces, including active duty service in a unit of the National Guard, Merchant Marine, or the Reserves;

Whereas the banner may be flown by families with a service member stationed either domestically or overseas;

Whereas the display of the banner in the front window of a home shows a family's pride in their loved one and is a reminder that preserving America's freedom demands great sacrifice; and

Whereas this reminder is especially timely during the current conflict with Iraq and the war on terrorism: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That the Congress—*

(1) calls on all Americans to honor the men and women of the United States Armed Forces and their families;

(2) honors the men and women of the United States Armed Forces and their families;

(3) encourages these families to proudly display the Blue Star Service Banner or, if their loved one has made the ultimate sacrifice, the Gold Star; and

(4) calls on the media to recognize the importance of the Blue Star Service Banner and its symbolism of the devotion and service of the men and women of the United States Armed Forces.

SEC. 2. The authority on which this resolution rests is the authority of Congress to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper as provided in Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE CONGRESS REGARDING THE BLUE STAR FLAG AND THE GOLD STAR

Mr. SUNUNU. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Armed Services Committee be discharged from further consideration of H. Con. Res. 109 and that the Senate then proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 109) expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the Blue Star Flag and the Gold Star.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. SUNUNU. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution and preamble be agreed to en bloc, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD, without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 109) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

BIRCH BAYH FEDERAL BUILDING AND UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE

Mr. SUNUNU. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 65, S. 763.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows: