A RESOLUTION

Urging the Congress of the United States to amend the Military Selective Service Act to require both men and women to register for the draft.

WHEREAS, Women served the United States Army during the American Revolution, nursing ill and wounded soldiers, mending clothing and cooking for the troops; and

WHEREAS, Women have served the United States Armed Forces in some capacity during every military conflict in our nation's history; and

WHEREAS, In addition to the recognized role of women in the armed forces during every military conflict, women have had de facto involvement in combat situations while being officially banned from combat; and

WHEREAS, For most of the early history of the United States military, women primarily served in clerical or military medical support services roles; and

WHEREAS, Women's formal military service began when the Congress of the United States established the Army Nurse Corps
in 1901 and the Navy Nurse Corps in 1908; and

WHEREAS, World War II compelled the Congress of the United States to provide for additional, extremely limited service roles due to the urgent need for manpower; and

WHEREAS, In the latter half of the 20th century, social change spurring the end of the military draft and the beginning of an all-volunteer force, along with the equal rights movement, led to increased integration of the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, In the more than a decade of war in Iraq and Afghanistan, more than 300,000 women served with courage, skill and patriotism; and

WHEREAS, More than 152 women in uniform have died while serving our nation in Iraq and Afghanistan; and

WHEREAS, Women currently make up more than 15% of the active-duty personnel in the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, Women are integral to the ability of the Department of Defense to fulfill its mission; and

WHEREAS, The United States Secretary of Defense announced the end of the direct ground combat exclusion rule for female service members in January 2013 following a unanimous recommendation by the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and

WHEREAS, The decision to end the direct ground combat exclusion rule opened approximately 237,000 positions to women, including 184,000 combat arms professions and 53,000 assignments that had been closed based on unit type; and

WHEREAS, This has ensured that the most qualified and most capable service members are available to carry out the mission regardless of gender; and

WHEREAS, The Secretary of Defense has further directed that
military service branches evaluate all occupational performance standards to ensure that they are up to date and gender neutral as part of a plan to eliminate unnecessary gender-based barriers to service; and

WHEREAS, Upon full implementation of the policy, military occupations will be closed to women only by exception and only if approved by the Secretary of Defense; and

WHEREAS, The Military Selective Service Act requires every male citizen of the United States and every male residing in the United States between 18 and 26 years of age to register with the Selective Service System; and

WHEREAS, Full equality for women in the United States Armed Forces should begin with gender-neutral Selective Service System registration; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Congress of the United States to amend the Military Selective Service Act to require both men and women to register for the draft; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the presiding officers of each house of Congress and each member of Congress from Pennsylvania.