

Veterans' Affairs Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SJ-3

RESOLUTION MEMORIALIZING CONGRESS TO RECOGNIZE WOMEN IN

Title: THE CADET NURSE CORPS DURING WORLD WAR II AS VETERANS.

Vote Date: 3/12/2019

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/14/2019

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Veterans' Affairs Committee

Sen. Catherine A. Osten

Sen. Paul M. Formica

Rep. Patrick S. Boyd

Rep. Holly H. Cheeseman

Rep. Kathleen M. McCarty

Rep. Kevin Ryan

Rep. John K. Hampton

Rep. Mike France

Rep. Craig C. Fishbein

Rep. Christine Conley

Rep. Anne Dauphinais

REASONS FOR BILL:

Established in 1943 in response to a shortage of nurses, the Cadet Nurse Corps afforded women the opportunity to serve their country in uniform. In exchange for a promise to serve for the duration of the war, the federal government subsidized the education and training of over one hundred thousand women through an accelerated program that provided federal and essential civilian medical facilities with the nursing staff needed to function. Between 1943 and 1945, over three thousand Connecticut women became cadet nurses and served in local hospitals. Due to having served under Public Health Services rather than military command, these women have not been recognized as veterans. S.J. No. 3 offers Connecticut's support for federal efforts to grant the women of the USCNC status as veterans.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed for S.J. No. 3

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Catherine A. Osten, Senator, Connecticut General Assembly](#): Senator Osten testified that the USCNC was the nation's first federal aid program for nursing students, underscoring the necessity of their service and their vital role in the war effort. The senator also emphasized that not only did the USCNC have an immediate effect on the nation's medical capabilities both at home and abroad, it also had profound impact on the nursing profession in the post-war period.

[Paul M. Formica, Senator, Connecticut General Assembly](#): Senator Formica expressed his pride to be able to stand in support of the women of the Cadet Nurse Corps, and observed that such testimony was possible only because of the strong men and women who have served our country.

[Holly H. Cheeseman, Representative, Connecticut General Assembly](#): Representative Cheeseman acknowledged the stark reality that time is not on the side of the women of the Cadet Nurse Corps, and that Connecticut's support of federal efforts to recognize these women as veterans will help insure that their patriotism and dedication will be recognized within their lifetimes.

[Kathleen M. McCarty, Representative, Connecticut General Assembly](#): In addition to providing a brief history of the program, Representative McCarty noted that the USCNC is the only uniformed service left that has not been given veteran status.

[K. Robert Lewis, Chairman, the American Legion Department of Connecticut Legislative Committee](#): Mr. Lewis testified that the American Legion is proud to endorse a resolution to bring long overdue recognition to the women who answered the nation's call.

[Eileen DeGaetano](#): As the daughter of a United States Cadet Nurse and a nurse herself, Ms. DeGaetano testified that despite the sweeping effect the USCNC had on the profession of nursing, few people had ever heard of it. Ms. DeGaetano recounted how she had struggled to find any commemoration of the program, and how she and a few others organized a community celebration, attended not only by fourteen Cadet Nurses but by one federal and six state legislators.

[Shirley A. Harrow](#): Ms. Harrow offered the "imagined ponderings of an eighty-something year old former US Cadet Nurse," in which she contemplates why USCNC members are not recognized as veterans, and why they are not included in stories of the "Greatest Generation."

[Elsie M. Szecsy](#): The daughter of a United States Cadet Nurse, Dr. Szecsy testified not only to the history of the USCNC but to the lasting impact it had on the profession of nursing. Dr. Szecsy also took care to mention that the remaining USCNC members were in their 90s, and that if they were to receive federal recognition before passing away, such action would need to happen quickly.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed for S.J. No. 3

Reported by: Benjamin S. Watson, Asst. Clerk Date: March 20th, 2019