

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 52

By McNally

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Miss Hannah Lawson of Lenoir City for her courage, her prayers, and her selfless service to the men and women of the United States Armed Forces.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective freedom, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, proudly upholding the ideal of the citizen soldier, gallant Americans are today serving with our armed forces in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other nations around the globe on our behalf, boldly and without hesitation or complaint, leaving behind the enduring warmth of family and home; and

WHEREAS, as these valorous soldiers endeavor to promote democracy and defend our liberties, one remarkable and especially courageous young lady from Lenoir City, Tennessee, has been faithfully praying for and e-mailing members of the Armed Forces, reaching out to comfort and aid a multitude while fighting her own personal battle with cancer; and

WHEREAS, when 8-year-old Heather Lawson was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor she reached out to the troops, and when any soldier offered to aid the little girl in her fight against cancer, she responded to their inquiries by asking instead what she could do for them; and

WHEREAS, as her list of e-mails and individuals to pray for soared to include soldiers around the globe, young Hannah started the "Army Angels" club, which now collects items for care packages for the individual soldiers as well as toys and schools supplies that the soldiers can give to children in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kosovo; and

WHEREAS, "Army Angels" has now grown to such a size that it also seeks to provide assistance to local groups and raise money for the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation. The group is now selling t-shirts, designed by Hannah, with a drawing of a camouflage-clad angel to raise funds; and

WHEREAS, "adopted" by the members of the Tennessee National Guard Southern Comfort medevac unit from Smyrna, Hannah was presented a brown teddy bear named Soco this past July by unit members upon their return from a tour of duty in Kosovo; and

WHEREAS, the soldiers, including Chief Warrant Officer David Creech, flew by Blackhawk helicopter to Tennessee Army National Guard Aviation Support Facility No. 2 in Blount County to meet this extraordinary young lady, having been inspired by her patriotism and dedication to the troops; they were overwhelmed by the wonderful crowd that attended in support; and

WHEREAS, in gratitude for her efforts, several soldiers sent Hannah an American flag that was flown in Afghanistan and dedicated in her honor; and

WHEREAS, "Army Angels" has also received the support of local Target stores and businesses in Knoxville, Rockwood, Kingston, Farragut, and Lenoir City; and

WHEREAS, supported in her efforts by her parents, Tracey and Greg Lawson, Hannah Lawson inspires everyone who she has ever met or come in contact with, from soldiers around the globe to the doctors and the medical staff at Thompson Cancer Center, who refer to her as the bright spot in their day; and

WHEREAS, it is highly appropriate that we especially recognize such an inspirational and noble act of kindness and patriotic support for our men and women in military service who defend our freedom so far from our shores; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor Hannah Lawson for her patriotism and compassion for our military service men and women with the creation of "Army Angels," commend her amazing personal strength and courage in her fight with cancer, and extend to her our heartfelt wishes for a complete recovery and return to excellent health.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.