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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 97

Offered January 13, 2022

Commending the Monument Terrace "Support Our Troops" rallies.

Patrons—Walker and Byron; Senators: Newman and Peake

WHEREAS, since November 30, 2001, veterans and patriots in the Lynchburg community have gathered every week for the Monument Terrace "Support Our Troops" rallies in support of members of the United States Armed Forces serving at home and abroad; and

WHEREAS, for more than 1,043 consecutive weeks, Monument Terrace "Support Our Troops" rally supporters have congregated every Friday at Monument Terrace in downtown Lynchburg, holding patriotic flags, displaying military memorabilia, and wearing red, white, and blue; and

WHEREAS, the Monument Terrace "Support Our Troops" rallies have brought people together, no matter their race, religion, political beliefs, or national origin to recognize that freedom is worth fighting for and justice should be the same for everyone; and

WHEREAS, over 4,000 unique challenge coins depicting a World War I "doughboy" on one side and "Honk if You Support Our Troops" on the other side have been presented to veterans and patriots who have attended the Monument Terrace "Support Our Troops" rallies; and

WHEREAS, out-of-town visitors from 44 states, Puerto Rico, Washington D.C., and 23 countries have received such a challenge coin at the Monument Terrace "Support Our Troops" rallies; and

WHEREAS, Monument Terrace "Support Our Troops" rally-goers line Church Street in a display of pride and patriotism to honor the faithful and dutiful service of members of all branches of the military; and

WHEREAS, with attendance averaging between 40 and 100 people each week, the Monument Terrace "Support Our Troops" rallies have included participants who served as members of the military in World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Cold War, the Gulf War, and, more recently, conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq; and

WHEREAS, many attendees of the Monument Terrace "Support Our Troops" rallies come to honor loved ones who are serving abroad, and all participants acknowledge the dangers faced and the sacrifices made by members of the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, during the Monument Terrace "Support Our Troops" rallies, a sign is displayed with the photos and names of the local soldiers who have died in the line of duty while serving in Afghanistan and Iraq to honor native sons and daughters of Lynchburg and the surrounding counties, and a "Honk if You Support Our Troops" sign is displayed on Church Street for drivers to show their support; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the Monument Terrace "Support Our Troops" rallies, members of several veterans organizations, including Military Order of the Purple Heart, Military Order of World Wars, Vietnam Veterans of America, Marine Corps League, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and motorcycle groups have united to offer help to less fortunate veterans and their families in the Lynchburg area and ultimately formed the Lynchburg Area Veterans Council, Inc., in 2015; and

WHEREAS, the Monument Terrace "Support Our Troops" rallies have gained widespread support in the Lynchburg community and serve as a reminder of the commitment and bravery of the veterans and active duty service members; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Monument Terrace "Support Our Troops" rallies hereby be commended on the occasion of the event's 20th anniversary on November 26, 2021; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Steve Bozeman, founder of the Monument Terrace "Support Our Troops" rallies, as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the event organizers' work to honor the service and sacrifices of members of the United States Armed Forces for more than 1,043 consecutive weeks.

INTRODUCED

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