

**No. R-505. House concurrent resolution in memory of Edna Fairbanks-Williams of Hubbardton.**

(H.C.R.369)

Offered by: Representatives Donahue of Northfield, French of Shrewsbury, Ainsworth of Royalton, Ancel of Calais, Andrews of Rutland City, Atkins of Winooski, Botzow of Pownal, Branagan of Georgia, Browning of Arlington, Canfield of Fair Haven, Clark of Vergennes, Clarkson of Woodstock, Clerkin of Hartford, Conquest of Newbury, Courcelle of Rutland City, Crawford of Burke, Davis of Washington, Deen of Westminster, Devereux of Mount Holly, Dickinson of St. Albans Town, Donaghy of Poultney, Donovan of Burlington, Edwards of Brattleboro, Evans of Essex, Fisher of Lincoln, Grad of Moretown, Greshin of Warren, Haas of Rochester, Head of South Burlington, Heath of Westford, Helm of Castleton, Higley of Lowell, Hooper of Montpelier, Howard of Cambridge, Howrigan of Fairfield, Hubert of Milton, Jerman of Essex, Jewett of Ripton, Keenan of St. Albans City, Kilmartin of Newport City, Kitzmiller of Montpelier, Koch of Barre Town, Komline of Dorset, Krawczyk of Bennington, Krebs of South Hero, Lanpher of Vergennes, Larocque of Barnet, Lawrence of Lyndon, Lenes of Shelburne, Leriche of Hardwick, Lewis of Derby, Lippert of Hinesburg, Manwaring of Wilmington, Marcotte of Coventry, Marek of Newfane, Martin of Springfield, Martin of Wolcott, McAllister of Highgate, McDonald of Berlin, McFaun of Barre Town, Milkey of Brattleboro, Miller of Shaftsbury, Minter of Waterbury, Mook of Bennington, Moran of Wardsboro, Morrissey of Bennington, Mrowicki of Putney, Myers of Essex, Nease of Johnson, Nuovo of Middlebury, O'Brien of Richmond, O'Donnell of Vernon, Olsen of Jamaica, Partridge of Windham, Pearce of Richford, Perley of Enosburg, Poirier of Barre City, Potter of Clarendon, Pugh of South Burlington, Reis of St. Johnsbury, Rodgers of Glover, Savage of Swanton, Scheuermann of Stowe, Shand of Weathersfield, Sharpe of Bristol, Shaw of Pittsford, Smith of Mendon, Spengler of Colchester, Stevens of Shoreham, Sweaney of Windsor, Taylor of Barre City, Till of Jericho, Toll of Danville, Townsend of Randolph, Turner of Milton, Waite-Simpson of Essex, Wilson of Manchester, Winters of Williamstown, Wizowaty of Burlington, Wright of Burlington and Zuckerman of Burlington

Whereas, the poorest and most needy Vermonters had a compassionate and tireless friend in Edna Fairbanks-Williams who put difficult personal health and economic limitations aside to fight their battles for daily sustenance, shelter, and human dignity, and

Whereas, she married at the young age of 15, and in the early 1960s found herself raising five young children as a single parent, and

Whereas, after earning money performing house cleaning and sewing jobs in order to repay a friend's loan to purchase an old car, her friend advised her to donate the funds to another person in need, a request that established her life's role as a tireless advocate for those who society has not favored, and

Whereas, in her 30s, Edna Fairbanks earned a high school equivalency certificate and familiarized herself with organizations working on behalf of the poor while employed at the Bennington-Rutland Opportunity Council, and

Whereas, after having left the council due to cancer surgery, she was fortunate to meet Douglas Williams, who became her new husband and a steady source of stability in her life, and

Whereas, in 1972, Edna Fairbanks-Williams' statewide role as an advocate for economically deprived Vermonters and those with disabilities came into full force when she helped organize the Vermont Low Income Advocacy Council, and

Whereas, she remained actively associated with the council's work for the next 38 years, and

Whereas, the boards of directors of other similarly oriented organizations that work on behalf of low income Vermonters and those with disabilities benefited from her participation and wisdom, including Vermont Legal Aid, the Legal Services Law Line of Vermont, the nonprofit Vermont Dental Care

Programs for low income children, and the Vermont Tobacco Evaluation and Review Board, and

Whereas, Edna Fairbanks-Williams' work and passion was extended beyond Vermont's borders when President Clinton appointed her to the board of the national Legal Services Corporation, and

Whereas, during the 2010 Vermont legislative session, Edna Fairbanks-Williams regularly appeared in the state house to plead against further human service funding cutbacks in the midst of a severe recession, and

Whereas, at 77, with meager economic resources and in less than robust health, Edna Fairbanks-Williams who was still fighting the good fight in Montpelier and delivering food and clothes to needy neighbors tragically died in an automobile accident near her Hubbardton home on Monday, May 10, and

Whereas, this amazing mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother of 16, has left a unique legacy of selfless service on behalf of the most vulnerable, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly expresses its most sincere condolences to the family of Edna Fairbanks-Williams, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to each of the three surviving children of Edna Fairbanks-Williams and to the Vermont Low Income Advocacy Council.