

No. R-107. House concurrent resolution congratulating Elizabeth Cushman Titus Putnam of Shaftsbury on being the first conservationist awarded the Presidential Citizens Medal.

(H.C.R.80)

Offered by: Representatives Miller of Shaftsbury and Campion of Bennington

Offered by: Senators Sears and Hartwell

Whereas, when Congress established Yellowstone National Park in 1872, a federal commitment to preserve America's most scenic landscapes for the enjoyment of current and future generations was launched, and

Whereas, as a student at Vassar College in the 1950s, Elizabeth Putnam greatly admired the natural heritage embodied in our national parks, but worried limited federal financial resources would stymie efforts to maintain these glorious acres in their most pristine state, and

Whereas, mere expressions of concern were insufficient for this forward-thinking woman, and in her senior thesis, Elizabeth Putnam outlined a proposal for a student conservation association, modeled on the New Deal's Civilian Conservation Corps, that would attract student volunteers to the national parks to perform necessary maintenance projects, and

Whereas, with the support of the National Park Service, this prescient plan served as the springboard for her formation in 1957 of the Student Conservation Association (SCA), and

Whereas, the first SCA crews traveled that year to Grand Teton and Olympic National parks where their commitment and energy set the stage for

other student crews which, in 2011, continue to improve and sustain our national parks and engage in other critical projects to preserve and restore the natural environment, and

Whereas, the SCA not only helps to preserve the national parks but also inspires these young volunteers to pursue professional careers in conservation, and its alumni have assumed prominent leadership roles in preserving American's natural landscape, and

Whereas, in 1969, the first Presidential Citizens Medal was awarded in recognition of "American citizens who have performed exemplary deeds of service for their country or fellow citizens," and is the second highest civilian award that our nation can bestow, and

Whereas, in the 40-plus-year history of this award, no recipient had ever been recognized for contributions to American conservation, and

Whereas, in 2010, President Obama decided the honorees should be individuals who significantly affected their communities for the better but may not have received public recognition for their work, and he solicited the public to submit names of possible honorees, and

Whereas, among the 13 individuals selected as 2010 recipients of the Presidential Citizens Medal was Elizabeth Putnam in recognition of her pivotal role in conserving America's natural scenic wonders, and President Obama presented her the medal on August 3, 2010, at a White House ceremony, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates Elizabeth Cushman Titus Putnam of Shaftsbury on being the first conservationist awarded the Presidential Citizens Medal, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Elizabeth Cushman Titus Putnam.