

**No. R-399. Joint resolution commemorating Women's History Month, the publication of the sixth edition of *The Legal Rights of Women in Vermont*, and reaffirming continuing support for equal rights for women.**

(J.R.H.29)

Offered by: Representatives Taylor of Barre City, Ancel of Calais, Bartholomew of Hartland, Batchelor of Derby, Bissonnette of Winooski, Branagan of Georgia, Browning of Arlington, Burke of Brattleboro, Buxton of Tunbridge, Champion of Bennington, Cheney of Norwich, Christie of Hartford, Clarkson of Woodstock, Conquest of Newbury, Consejo of Sheldon, Copeland-Hanzas of Bradford, Courcelle of Rutland City, Dakin of Chester, Davis of Washington, Donovan of Burlington, Edwards of Brattleboro, Ellis of Waterbury, Emmons of Springfield, Evans of Essex, Frank of Underhill, French of Shrewsbury, Grad of Moretown, Haas of Rochester, Head of South Burlington, Hooper of Montpelier, Jerman of Essex, Kitzmiller of Montpelier, Klein of East Montpelier, Komline of Dorset, Krebs of South Hero, Lanpher of Vergennes, Lawrence of Lyndon, Lenes of Shelburne, Lippert of Hinesburg, Lorber of Burlington, Macaig of Williston, Malcolm of Pawlet, Manwaring of Wilmington, Marek of Newfane, Martin of Wolcott, Masland of Thetford, McAllister of Highgate, McCullough of Williston, McNeil of Rutland Town, Miller of Shaftsbury, Mook of Bennington, Munger of South Burlington, Myers of Essex, O'Brien of Richmond, O'Sullivan of Burlington, Partridge of Windham, Pearson of Burlington, Poirier of Barre City, Potter of Clarendon, Pugh of South Burlington, Ralston of Middlebury, Ram of Burlington, Russell of Rutland City, Scheuermann of Stowe, Shand of Weathersfield, Shaw of Pittsford, Stevens of Waterbury, Stevens of Shoreham, Stuart of Brattleboro, Sweaney of Windsor, Till of Jericho, Toll of Danville, Waite-Simpson of Essex, Webb of Shelburne, Wizowaty of Burlington, Yantachka of Charlotte and Zagar of Barnard

Whereas, the month of March is Women's History Month, an annual worldwide celebration highlighting the contributions of women in history and society, and

Whereas, many Vermonters, both men and women, have fought for equal rights for women under the law, and

Whereas, Clarina Howard Nichols, a journalist and advocate for women's rights, temperance, and antislavery, was the first women to address the

Vermont legislature, and she contributed to reform of married women's property rights in 1847 and introduced school suffrage for women in Vermont, and

Whereas, the contributions of many other Vermont women may be found in the Vermont Women's History Project database maintained by the Vermont Historical Society, and

Whereas, in order to access justice under the law, women need to understand their rights, and

Whereas, the Vermont Commission on Women has published a handbook for this purpose since 1977 called *The Legal Rights of Women in Vermont*, and the sixth edition of this handbook has now been digitally published on the commission's website, [www.women.vermont.gov](http://www.women.vermont.gov), and the commission will assist those without a computer, and

Whereas, written in plain English, this comprehensive guide is an up-to-date digital resource providing explanations of many topics, and each chapter concludes with links to the commission's online resource directory and to federal and state statutory websites that enable the reader to find and read applicable laws, and

Whereas, while written for women, *The Legal Rights of Women in Vermont* covers legal issues affecting all Vermonters, including: adoption, guardianship and emancipated minors, consumer protection and fair credit, domestic relations; education, employment rights, housing and property rights,

immigration, insurance, name changes, public accommodations, public assistance and government benefits, reproductive rights, violence against women and children; and wills, probate court, and advanced directives, and

Whereas, Vermont Women's History Project, a program through the Vermont Historical Society, is a dynamic database of all Vermont women who have contributed to our state's history, including Vermont's first 100 women lawyers, and

Whereas, on March 21, 2012 at 12:00 noon, the Vermont Women's History Project is sponsoring a panel discussion with four women lawyers who have made strides in women's legal rights, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly commemorates Women's History Month and the publication of the sixth edition of *The Legal Rights of Women in Vermont* and reaffirms its continuing support of equal rights for women, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Vermont Women's History Project, the Vermont Commission on Women, and the Women's Section of the Vermont Bar Association.