

No. R-32. House concurrent resolution congratulating the Rutland Senior High School students whose petition persuaded Apple to remove the After School iPhone App from its iTunes Store.

(H.C.R.16)

Offered by: Representatives Cupoli of Rutland City, Fagan of Rutland City, Gage of Rutland City, Russell of Rutland City, Tate of Mendon, and Terenzini of Rutland Town

Offered by: Senators Collamore, Flory, and Mullin

Whereas, the Apple iTunes Store described the After School iPhone App as a virtual bulletin board for posting “funny, anonymous school news,” and

Whereas, despite this rather benign description, After School features many cruel and disparaging comments that high school students post, and

Whereas, according to the Rutland Herald, “many [Rutland Senior High School] students ended up crying in their guidance counselors’ offices,” because of the cyberbullying they experienced from After School’s postings, and

Whereas, faculty, staff, and most importantly the students at Rutland Senior High School (RSHS) took direct action to negate the impact of After School, and

Whereas, senior Catherine DiPalma and approximately 25 other students appeared on the school’s video announcements to request that their peers delete the After School App from their phones, and

Whereas, as a second and broader step, the RSHS student group Cyber You, under the effective leadership of sophomore Molly Engles, posted a petition on the online activism platform Change.org, urging Apple to remove this iPhone app from its iTunes Store, and

Whereas, Cyber You’s faculty advisor, guidance counselor Kate Herlihy assisted in circulating the petition in the school’s lunchroom, and

Whereas, Governor Shumlin tweeted and posted a message on Facebook in support of the petition, and among the signatories were Vermont Secretary of Education Rebecca Holcombe, Rutland City Police Chief James Baker, and Vermont Superintendents Association Executive Director Jeff Francis, and

Whereas, more than 1,000 responses to the petition far exceeded Cyber You’s expectations and persuaded Apple to remove the After School App from its iTunes Store, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates the Rutland Senior High School students whose petition persuaded Apple to remove the After School iPhone App from its iTunes Store, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Cyber You at Rutland Senior High School and to each of the students named in this resolution.