

No. R-246. Senate concurrent resolution congratulating the Green Mountain Foster Grandparent Program on its 50th anniversary.

(S.C.R.26)

By Senators Collamore, Flory, and Mullin,

By Representatives Burditt of West Rutland, Canfield of Fair Haven, Carr of Brandon, Chesnut-Tangerman of Middletown Springs, Cupoli of Rutland City, Devereux of Mount Holly, Eastman of Orwell, Haas of Rochester, Helm of Fair Haven, McCoy of Poultney, Potter of Clarendon, Russell of Rutland City, Shaw of Pittsford, Tate of Mendon, and Terenzini of Rutland Town,

Whereas, young children and persons 55 years of age or older can be mutually supportive, and

Whereas, on the same day in 1965, Sargent Shriver, the Director of the Office of Economy Opportunity, visited both children with intellectual disabilities and a senior citizens center, and

Whereas, he recognized the youngsters needed more attention, including being read to and involvement in playing games, than the staff at the children's center could offer, and the adults longed for an activity in which they could offer help and affection to others, and

Whereas, Sargent Shriver realized these two groups could form a creative partnership, and

Whereas, from this idea emerged the Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) that offers continuing intergenerational nurturing relationships, resulting in the participating children's emotional and social growth, increased self-confidence, and breaking of negative stereotypes of old people, and

Whereas, the senior volunteers, who are on limited incomes, gain tax-free stipends they spend in their local communities, and studies have documented that seniors' mental and physical health improves, and

Whereas, in 1966, a year after the FGP was established, it was introduced in Vermont under the banner of the Green Mountain Foster Grandparent Program (GMFGP), and

Whereas, during the past half century, GMFGP has offered its senior volunteers in Addison, Bennington, and Rutland counties a wonderful opportunity to help children, as well as brighten and enhance the volunteers' own lives, and

Whereas, according to GMFGP's most recent annualized data, 69 senior volunteers served 848 children at 34 schools or nonprofit organizations for a total of 67,664 community service hours, and

Whereas, seniors and children in other Vermont counties beyond GMFGP's jurisdiction are also now participating successfully in the federal FGP, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates the Green Mountain Foster Grandparent Program on its 50th anniversary, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Green Mountain Foster Grandparent Program in Rutland.