

No. R-290. House concurrent resolution commemorating the 225th anniversary of Congress's admission of Vermont as our nation's 14th State.

(H.C.R.217)

Offered by: Representatives Devereux of Mount Holly, Branagan of Georgia, Jerman of Essex, and Sweaney of Windsor

Offered by: Senators Campbell, McCormack and Nitka

Whereas, Vermont's admission into the United States as the 14th State required a 24-year campaign of repeated petitions to Congress and political intrigue, and

Whereas, on January 15, 1777, an assembly of local citizens met in Westminster and declared the independence of the State of New Connecticut, and

Whereas, however, the new State's territory was situated entirely within the boundaries of New York State, which proved a difficult barrier to overcome for statehood approval, and

Whereas, in April 1777, New Connecticut petitioned Congress to be "ranked among the free and independent states," and

Whereas, nearly contemporaneous with the petition, this aspiring State became known as Vermont, and

Whereas, statehood advocate Dr. Thomas Young predicted the new State's admission as the 14th State would occur upon the adoption of a State Constitution and the election of congressional delegates, and

Whereas, to the contrary, in June 1777, Congress rejected the petition and described the statehood proposal as "derogatory to the honor of congress," and

Whereas, undeterred, in July 1777, Vermont leaders convened in Windsor, adopting a State Constitution that afforded broad freedoms including a ban on slavery and that established the General Assembly and statewide officers, and

Whereas, Vermont continued to seek admission into the Union, but in June 1780, Congress adopted a resolution declaring the effort "highly unwarrantable and subversive of the peace and welfare of the United States," and

Whereas, after Vermont officials explored aligning with the British, and the General Assembly's February 1782 reversal of its prior annexation of additional New York towns and a number of New Hampshire municipalities, the congressional attitude toward Vermont's statehood started becoming more favorable, and

Whereas, finally, on March 4, 1791, Congress adopted an act granting Vermont's admission into the Union as the 14th state, and March 4, 2016 marks the 225th anniversary of this momentous occasion, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly commemorates the 225th anniversary of Congress's admission of Vermont as our nation's 14th State, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Vermont Historical Society.