

119TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. RES. _____

Commending the “Donut Dollies” for their patriotic service and steadfast support of United States servicemembers in combat and honoring their extraordinary contributions to the morale and well-being of United States servicemembers during wartime.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. TILLIS submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the
Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Commending the “Donut Dollies” for their patriotic service and steadfast support of United States servicemembers in combat and honoring their extraordinary contributions to the morale and well-being of United States servicemembers during wartime.

Whereas, in 1917, during World War I, young women of the Salvation Army known as the “Doughnut Lassies” served near the front lines, providing hot coffee, doughnuts, and comfort to United States servicemembers, inspiring the later creation of National Doughnut Day in their honor;

Whereas, during World War II, the American Red Cross organized the Clubmobile program, staffed by courageous women affectionately called “Donut Dollies”, who traveled across war zones in Europe, North Africa, and the

Pacific serving coffee and doughnuts, offering conversation, and boosting the morale of servicemembers;

Whereas, during the Korean War, the American Red Cross continued to deploy Donut Dollies to recreation centers, service clubs, and forward operating bases, organizing activities and providing personal support to servicemembers enduring the harsh conditions of war;

Whereas, from 1965 to 1972, the American Red Cross operated the Supplemental Recreation Activities Overseas (referred to in this preamble as “SRAO”) program in the Republic of Vietnam, deploying more than 600 young women, most recent college graduates, to remote bases, fire support locations, and hospitals to provide refreshments, morale, and recreation activities to United States servicemembers;

Whereas the Donut Dollies often traveled by helicopter or convoy into active combat zones, facing mortar fire, sniper threats, and the dangers of war in order to deliver games, conversation, and a sense of home;

Whereas, based on Red Cross estimates—

(1) around 280,500 servicemembers benefitted from the SRAO program;

(2) the Donut Dollies traveled 27,000 miles by jeep, truck, airplane, and helicopter every month; and

(3) during the 7 years the SRAO program was in operation, the women logged over 2,125,000 miles;

Whereas the first SRAO unit opened at Danang in September 1965, followed quickly by others at Bien Hoa, Nha Trang, Cam Ranh Air Force and Army bases, Dian, Quang Tri, Phu Bai, Lai Khe, Dong Tam, and Qui

Nhon, Xuan Loc and, in all, there were 28 SRAO unit locations throughout the country;

Whereas military commanders expressed high praise for the Red Cross volunteers, calling the services of the organization “indispensable” and “prime factors” in their efforts to maintain the high morale of their men and to look after their welfare;

Whereas, writing to Red Cross national headquarters in 1968, General William Westmoreland, then commander of the United States forces in Southeast Asia, stated, “Serving our men on the battlefields here in Vietnam, the American Red Cross is a hotline to the folks back home, an oasis in the heat of battle, and a comfort during hospitalization.”;

Whereas the Donut Dollies not only uplifted the spirits of tens of thousands of soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines, but also bore emotional burdens from hearing the fears and losses of those they served, many of whom did not return;

Whereas the Red Cross volunteers shared with military personnel the hardship and privation of life in a war zone and were subject to the dangers of war;

Whereas many staff were injured, and 5 American Red Cross workers died in-country, including 3 women, Hannah E. Crews, Virginia E. Kirsch, and Lucinda J. Richter, all of whom were members of the SRAO program;

Whereas the service of the Donut Dollies, who volunteered to be sent to the frontlines to support servicemembers, directly engaged with the enemy through providing recreation, refreshments, and entertainment to our

servicemembers during the Vietnam War, displaying courage and resilience; and

Whereas the legacy of the Donut Dollies continues to be honored by veterans who remember their visits as a light in the darkest days of war, and the extraordinary efforts of these volunteers throughout the extent of involvement of the United States in the Vietnam conflict is deserving of official recognition: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) commends the Donut Dollies for their patri-
3 otic service to the United States and steadfast dedi-
4 cation to the morale and welfare of United States
5 servicemembers in combat;

6 (2) recognizes the service of the Salvation Army
7 Doughnut Lassies in World War I, who inspired fu-
8 ture generations of Donut Dollies;

9 (3) honors the Donut Dollies of World War II,
10 the Korean War, and especially those of the Supple-
11 mental Recreation Activities Overseas program in
12 the Vietnam War for their courage, resilience, and
13 lasting impact on the lives of those they served; and

14 (4) urges that the story of the Donut Dollies be
15 preserved and shared as an enduring testament to
16 the spirit of the United States during wartime serv-
17 ice.