

House Resolution 1586

By: Representatives Cannon of the 58th, Lim of the 98th, Drenner of the 85th, Draper of the 90th, and Park of the 107th

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring Monica Helms; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, Monica Helms, a distinguished veteran of the United States Navy, served with
3 honor and distinction aboard the submarines *USS Francis Scott Key* and the *USS Flasher*,
4 undertaking arduous missions of up to 70 days each and demonstrating unwavering
5 dedication, fortitude, and commitment to the defense of her nation; and

6 WHEREAS, Monica Helms, serving as a nuclear-trained machinist mate aboard the
7 submarines *USS Francis Scott Key* from 1972 to 1976 and the *USS Flasher* from 1976 to
8 1978, exemplified dedication, expertise, and resilience in her role, contributing significantly
9 to the navy's mission and embodying the highest ideals of service and sacrifice; and

10 WHEREAS, Monica Helms, amidst the rigors and demands of military service, courageously
11 grappled with the profound challenge of concealing her true identity as a transgender woman,
12 navigating a landscape where authenticity was often met with discrimination, ostracism, and
13 the threat of dishonor; and

14 WHEREAS, Monica Helms, propelled by her unwavering commitment to justice, equality,
15 and human dignity, dedicated her life to advocating for the rights and recognition of

16 transgender individuals, particularly those who have served in the armed forces, tirelessly
17 championing their cause with unwavering determination, compassion, and unwavering
18 resolve; and

19 WHEREAS, Monica Helms, in her steadfast pursuit of social justice and equality,
20 demonstrated unparalleled courage, compassion, and integrity, has inspired generations of
21 activists, advocates, and allies to stand up, speak out, and strive for a more inclusive,
22 equitable, and compassionate world; and

23 WHEREAS, Monica Helms, relocating to Atlanta, Georgia, in 2000, emerged as a leading
24 voice and advocate for transgender rights and veterans' issues, founding the Transgender
25 American Veterans Association in 2003 and serving as its president until 2013, tirelessly
26 championing equality, justice, and dignity for all; and

27 WHEREAS, Monica Helms, through her visionary leadership, creative ingenuity, and tireless
28 activism, bestowed upon the world the enduring symbol of the transgender pride flag, a
29 powerful emblem of visibility, unity, and resilience that has since become an iconic and
30 universally recognized symbol of the LGBTQIA+ rights movement; and

31 WHEREAS, Monica Helms designed the first transgender pride flag in 1999 as a symbol of
32 trans diversity and rights, which she debuted at a Pride parade in Phoenix in 2000. She used
33 pink and blue stripes to represent colors that have traditionally been associated with girls and
34 boys with a white middle stripe for people who are intersex, transitioning, or who do not
35 have a defined gender. In 2014, Helms donated multiple objects to the Smithsonian's
36 National Museum of American History, including this flag; and

37 WHEREAS, Monica Helms, a resident of Georgia, shares her life with her beloved wife,
38 Darlene Wagner, embodying the values of love, commitment, and partnership as well as
39 enriching the lives of all who know them with their warmth, kindness, and unwavering
40 support for one another.

41 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
42 the members of this body, assembled in solemn recognition of Monica Helms' extraordinary
43 life and enduring legacy, extend their deepest appreciation, admiration, and gratitude for her
44 selfless service, indomitable spirit, and transformative contributions to our nation and to the
45 global LGBTQIA+ community.

46 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
47 and directed to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to
48 Monica Helms.