

No. R-157. House concurrent resolution congratulating Steve Gagner on his selection as the 2019 U.S. Small Business Administration's Vermont Small Business Person of the Year.

(H.C.R.131)

Offered by: Representatives McCarthy of St. Albans City, Toof of St. Albans Town, and Gregoire of Fairfield

Whereas, while serving in Afghanistan, Steve Gagner sketched on the back of a notebook, with his friend and fellow soldier, Matt Kehaya, a business plan for a craft brewery, and

Whereas, upon their return home, they refined the plan and, with Steve Gagner as the majority owner, opened the 14th Star Brewing Company, and

Whereas, the brewery initially sold its malt beverage products directly to customers in growlers and to local restaurants for on-tap service, and

Whereas, the name, 14th Star, symbolizes Vermont's entry into the Union as the 14th state, and

Whereas, the now greatly expanded 14th Star Brewing Company is headquartered in a 20,000-square-foot space in the St. Albans Shopping Plaza, has a staff of 24 employees, and distributes its product in six states, and

Whereas, a portion of the proceeds from the sale of each batch of 14th Star's Valor Ale is donated to Purple Hearts Reunited, an organization that returns lost or stolen military medals to their rightful owners, and annually, the brewery holds a fundraising event to support the Josh Pallotta Fund, which works to prevent suicides among veterans, and

Whereas, in recognition of the brewery's many charitable projects, it was the recipient of the 2017 Tim Bovat Award for Civic Engagement, and

Whereas, Major Steve Gagner is the executive officer for the Vermont Army National Guard's Army Mountain Warfare School and an assistant professor of military science at Norwich University, and

Whereas, Steve Gagner cofounded Danger Close Craft Distilling, a company that teaches entrepreneurship to veterans, and he was named the 2018 *Military Times* Entrepreneur of the Year, and

Whereas, he has now been honored as the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2019 Vermont Small Business Person of the Year, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates Steve Gagner on his selection as the 2019 U.S. Small Business Administration's Vermont Small Business Person of the Year, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Steve Gagner and to the 14th Star Brewing Company.