
ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION

Relating to: the life and public service of Virginia B. Hart.

Whereas, Virginia Baily Hart, who for decades served as a champion for women in public service, passed away at the age of 92 on Saturday, March 24, 2007, in Fitchburg, Wisconsin; and

Whereas, Virginia Hart became the first woman appointed to a cabinet post in Wisconsin when Governor Patrick Lucey named her secretary of the Department of Regulation and Licensing in 1973; and

Whereas, in 1977, Virginia Hart was selected as chair of the state Industry, Labor, and Human Relations Commission, and later as chair of the Labor and Industry Review Commission; and

Whereas, Virginia Hart also served on the Judicial Commission, the state Board of Vocational and Adult Education, the state Public Defender Board, and the board of directors of the American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin; and

Whereas, this year is the 24th anniversary of the Virginia Hart Special Recognition Award, which was established upon Virginia Hart's retirement from state government in 1983 to honor women in public service who demonstrate exemplary performance that improves the quality of life for Wisconsin citizens; and

Whereas, Virginia Hart was a superb advocate for workers' rights from the very start of her career, first as a social worker in Rochester, New York, later working for the International Ladies Garment Workers Union in Tennessee during the 1940s, and then coming to Wisconsin where she taught at the UW-Madison School for Workers while earning a master's degree in labor economics in 1947; and

Whereas, in the 1960s, Virginia Hart helped set up the Community Welfare Council, which later became the Community Action Commission of Dane County, and served as its president from 1967-1969; and

Whereas, Virginia Hart was appointed to two terms on the Police and Fire Commission where she worked to improve opportunities for women on both the Madison Fire Department and the Madison Police Department; and

Whereas, Virginia Hart helped to form the Group Health Cooperative of South Central Wisconsin, was executive secretary of the Democratic Party of Wisconsin, and more recently was involved in the Dudgeon-Monroe Neighborhood Association in Madison; and

Whereas, Virginia Hart was a world traveler, backpacking with her husband of 67 years, Henry Hart, in the Rockies, the Andes, and the Himalayas, and working as a labor education specialist at the University of Hawaii and for the Agency for International Development in New Delhi, India; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That the members of the Wisconsin legislature commend Virginia Hart for her decades of public service, her trailblazing efforts to advance the causes of women and working people, and her grace and spirit; express their deep sorrow at her death; and extend their sincere condolences to her family and friends; and, be it further

Resolved, That the assembly chief clerk shall provide a copy of this joint resolution to Virginia Hart's husband, Henry Hart; her daughter, Nancy Hart Hernandez, of Houston, Texas; and her son, Benjamin Baily Hart, of Dallas, Texas.

Senator Fred A. Risser
President of the Senate

Representative Michael D. Huebsch
Speaker of the Assembly

Date

Patrick E. Fuller
Assembly Chief Clerk