

No. R-108. House concurrent resolution honoring the humanitarian efforts of the Vermont Haiti Project and recognizing its social and cultural contributions to the State of Vermont.

(H.C.R.75)

Offered by: Representatives Ryerson of Randolph, Briglin of Thetford, Clarkson of Woodstock, Cole of Burlington, Connor of Fairfield, Eastman of Orwell, Graham of Williamstown, Lucke of Hartford, Mrowicki of Putney, Partridge of Windham, Patt of Worcester, Toleno of Brattleboro, Townsend of South Burlington, Woodward of Johnson, and Zagar of Barnard

Whereas, the Vermont Haiti Project (VHP) was formed in 2007 as a formal extension of Project Haiti, an organization that had devoted 18 years to providing humanitarian services in rural Haiti, and

Whereas, in 2009, the Internal Revenue Service granted the VHP 501(c)(3) nonprofit status, and

Whereas, the organization's goals include promoting "sustainability and capacity building through people-to-people partnerships," and "creating solutions from the inside out to develop healthier communities and cultural exchange opportunities," and

Whereas, VHP schedules volunteer work trips from Vermont several times each year, and VHP members have spoken at schools in Massachusetts, Vermont, and New Hampshire, and

Whereas, the activities of VHP are neither religiously nor politically centered, and

Whereas, the cultural exchange is a two-way process as VHP sponsors educational and professional development trips of Haitians to the United States, and Rotary and Rotary International, whose members have traveled to Haiti, have supported VHP's programs, and

Whereas, while in the United States, these Haitian delegations are also educating Americans about Haiti, and

Whereas, these exchange programs enable the VHP to act as a cultural good will ambassador for both the State of Vermont and the United States, and

Whereas, following the devastating earthquake in Haiti on January 12, 2010, members of VHP traveled to the island nation to assist in the post-earthquake relief work, and

Whereas, in remarks on February 4, 2010, U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy praised VHP's relief work in Haiti, and

Whereas, VHP's current initiatives are created with the people of Haiti, who serve as the administrators of these projects, including the opening of a vocational school in Duchity, Haiti, and the ongoing installation of vital water filtration projects, with 300 installed to date, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly honors the humanitarian efforts of the Vermont Haiti Project and recognizes its social and cultural contributions to the State of Vermont, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Vermont Haiti Project in Shelburne.