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HR-30 (2015-2016)

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AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY SEPTEMBER 02, 2015

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2015–2016 REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE RESOLUTION

NO. 30

Introduced by Assembly Member Atkins

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Eggman, Cristina Garcia, ~~and Irwin~~ *Irwin, Achadjian, Alejo, Travis Allen, Baker, Bigelow, Bloom, Brough, Brown, Burke, Calderon, Campos, Chang, Chau, Chávez, Chiu, Chu, Cooper, Dababneh, Dahle, Daly, Dodd, Frazier, Beth Gaines, Gallagher, Eduardo Garcia, Gatto, Gipson, Gordon, Grove, Hadley, Roger Hernández, Holden, Jones, Jones-Sawyer, Kim, Lackey, Levine, Linder, Lopez, Low, Maienschein, Mathis, Mayes, McCarty, Medina, Melendez, Mullin, Nazarian, Obernolte, O'Donnell, Olsen, Patterson, Perea, Quirk, Rendon, Rodriguez, Salas, Santiago, Mark Stone, Thurmond, Ting, Wagner, Weber, Wilk, Williams, and Wood*)

August 27, 2015

Relative to the first female graduates of the United States Army Ranger School.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

HR 30, as amended, Atkins.

WHEREAS, Women have proudly served in the Armed Forces of the United States (Armed Forces) throughout our nation's history; and

WHEREAS, Over the past century, women have been gradually authorized to serve in more advanced roles in the Armed Forces, and, with each milestone, from the 1901 inception of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps, to the passage of the Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948, making women a permanent part of the military, and the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993, repealing laws preventing women from flying combat aircrafts, female soldiers have demonstrated their bravery, their dedication, and their patriotism; and

WHEREAS, Despite women's advancement in the military, women have been banned from front-line combat positions, and yet, in the past decade of conflict, the distinction between noncombat and combat roles has blurred, as over 300,000 women have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001, where 152 women in uniform have been killed, including 84 who were in hostile action, and approximately 1,000 have been wounded; and

WHEREAS, In recognition of the changing reality of the modern battle field as well as the exemplary performance of female soldiers, in 2013, the Pentagon lifted the ban on women in combat and gave military leaders until the end of 2015 to recommend which jobs should remain male only; and

WHEREAS, As a result, the Army opened up its elite Ranger School, the Army's premier combat leadership course, to female soldiers for the first time this year as a pilot program; and

WHEREAS, 19 female and 380 male soldiers began the course, and included within this group were Captain Kristen Griest, a military police platoon leader who has served one tour of duty in Afghanistan, and First Lieutenant Shaye Haver, an Apache helicopter pilot, both graduates of the United States Military Academy at West Point; and

WHEREAS, The grueling Ranger School identifies and trains one of our nation's elite combat forces, focusing on military skills, endurance, and survival techniques, and exposing candidates to extreme mental and physical stress; and

WHEREAS, Although, for the first time, both male and female soldiers were part of the Ranger School class, the same standards for successful completion of the Ranger School were required of all soldiers, regardless of gender; and

WHEREAS, Captain Griest and First Lieutenant Haver successfully completed the Ranger course with 94 other Ranger candidates; and

WHEREAS, On August 21, 2015, Captain Griest and First Lieutenant Haver became the first two female soldiers to graduate from the Ranger School paving the way for future generations of Army Rangers, and our nation's other elite combat forces, to finally be selected from the ranks of all top soldiers, regardless of gender; and

WHEREAS, Despite this barrier-breaking accomplishment of Captain Griest and First Lieutenant Haver, these trailblazers, because they are female, are not yet permitted to join Army Ranger battalions, or to serve in the infantry or any other special operations post, yet both have expressed their desire that the Army end this policy; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, That the Assembly urges the Pentagon to allow Captain Griest, First Lieutenant Haver, and any other qualified female soldier to serve in the Army Rangers and other combat units of the armed services; and be it further

Resolved, That the Assembly recognizes and honors the patriotism, dedication, and perseverance of Captain Griest and First Lieutenant Haver and the historic importance of their achievement to the advancement of women in the Armed Forces;

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.