

By: Morales of Harris

H.C.R. No. 51

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, The brutal murder of Vanessa Guillén and the
2 reaction from service members on social media highlight the
3 military's inadequate response to sexual harassment, sexual
4 assault, and missing persons; and

5 WHEREAS, Fort Hood soldier Vanessa Guillén had been missing
6 for more than two months before her remains were discovered, and the
7 murder investigation received widespread attention when law
8 enforcement identified the suspect, a fellow military member whom
9 Guillén was planning to formally accuse of sexual harassment; this
10 prompted countless members of the U.S. military to share their
11 personal experiences of sexual harassment and sexual assault on
12 social media with the hashtag #IAMVanessaGuillen; and

13 WHEREAS, A close look at current military laws and policies
14 reveals concerning flaws, including conflicts of interest when
15 commanding officers make charging decisions, investigations being
16 made by untrained service members, and limited options for
17 reporting sexual harassment; too many military members have been
18 failed by this system, and immediate action is imperative to avoid
19 another tragedy; and

20 WHEREAS, To correct these issues, the I am Vanessa Guillén
21 Act has been introduced in Congress with bipartisan support from
22 the U.S. House of Representatives; if passed, the legislation would
23 ensure that necessary changes are made, such as transferring
24 charging decisions for sex-related offenses to a chief prosecutor,

1 requiring independent investigations that are conducted by trained
2 investigators, and establishing a confidential reporting option
3 for sexual harassment that can convert to a formal complaint at any
4 time; in addition, it would direct the Government Accountability
5 Office to evaluate response procedures relating to missing service
6 members; and

7 WHEREAS, The brave men and women who fight for our nation
8 deserve access to justice, and Congress should listen to the
9 service members calling for change in the aftermath of Vanessa
10 Guillén's murder; now, therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, That the 87th Legislature of the State of Texas
12 hereby respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to pass
13 the I am Vanessa Guillén Act; and, be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
15 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to
16 the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of
17 Representatives of the United States Congress, and to all the
18 members of the Texas delegation to Congress with the request that
19 this resolution be entered in the Congressional Record as a
20 memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.