By: Metcalf H.C.R. No. 8

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Americans owe an incalculable debt of gratitude to the members of the United States armed forces, who have answered the call to defend our freedoms and who willingly shoulder extraordinary burdens in service to our nation; and

WHEREAS, The families of military personnel likewise make profound sacrifices, and for those who have lost a loved one to suicide, the grief they experience is often compounded by social stigma and feelings of isolation; and

WHEREAS, Far too many service members confront significant challenges both during their military careers and as they transition to civilian life; according to data published by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 581 veterans in the State of Texas died by suicide in 2023, representing a rate that's more than double that of the state's general population; moreover, there has been a significant increase in suicides among veterans between the ages of 18 and 34 over the past quarter century; and

WHEREAS, The Green Star Service Banner was established by the Green Star Families of America organization as a symbol of recognition to be presented to the surviving families of veterans who have died by suicide, with the goal of ensuring that the families are accorded the acknowledgment, respect, and support they deserve; drawing on the tradition of the Gold Star Service Banner, which signifies the loss of a member of the military in the line of duty, the Green Star banner features a Kelly green five-pointed

star, with the color signifying hope and growth in the heraldic tradition; and

WHEREAS, Through its presentation, the Green Star Service Banner is intended to provide enduring recognition of a veteran's contributions while strengthening their loved ones' sense of belonging in the military and veteran community; since launching the initiative, the members of Green Star Families of America have worked to secure widespread recognition of the banner and to build greater public awareness around the issue of veteran suicide; and

WHEREAS, The Green Star Service Banner stands as a poignant symbol of acknowledgment and remembrance, and it reminds us of our solemn duty to commemorate the service of veterans lost to suicide and the importance of offering compassion and kindness to their families; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the 90th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby officially recognize the Green Star Service Banner as a symbol honoring the service and memory of veterans who died by suicide and recognizing the families they leave behind.