

No. R-330. House concurrent resolution congratulating Alexina Federhen on winning U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders's 2014 State of the Union Essay Contest.

(H.C.R.235)

Offered by: Representatives Campion of Bennington, Corcoran of Bennington, Mook of Bennington, and Morrissey of Bennington

Offered by: Senators Hartwell, MacDonald, McCormack, Nitka, Rodgers, Sears, and Starr

Whereas, U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders conducts an annual State of the Union Essay Contest for high school students that coincides with the President's annual address to Congress, and

Whereas, the contest is "designed to engage Vermont's high school students on the major issues facing the country," and

Whereas, in establishing the contest, Senator Sanders expressed a concern that too many high school students are unacquainted with the functioning of government in a democracy, and

Whereas, in 2014, the contest winner is Mt. Anthony Union High School junior Alexina Federhen, and

Whereas, her essay will be published in the *Congressional Record*, and she will participate in a roundtable panel discussion with other top finalists, and

Whereas, Alexina Federhen's winning essay is entitled "A House Divided," citing the speech Abraham Lincoln delivered in 1858, and

Whereas, in her essay, Alexina Federhen mentioned issues that confronted the country in 2013, including the Detroit bankruptcy, school shootings, the Edward Snowden leaks, and the Boston Marathon bombing, and

Whereas, beyond these topics, she identified "a Congress so dysfunctional that it could not even manage to operate the government for the entire year," as the most important issue facing the nation, and

Whereas, she opined that the United States needs federal legislators "who will set aside personal gain and divisive ideology in order to build compromise and find consensus on the issues that challenge us," and

Whereas, in a newspaper interview, Alexina Federhen compared the Congress of Lincoln's era to 2014 and found the former to be "more open to new ideas," and

Whereas, Alexina Federhen is a member of the National Honor Society and aspires to attend a leading college or university, and

Whereas, she has expressed her views on the country's national civic discourse most thoughtfully, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates Alexina Federhen on winning U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders's 2014 State of the Union Essay Contest, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Alexina Federhen.