



Office of
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For Immediate Release

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Representative Kane supports commission to honor American Revolutionary War heroine Deborah Sampson

BOSTON – State Representative Hannah Kane, R-Shrewsbury, is supporting efforts to honor a local woman who served in the American Revolutionary War with a permanent memorial at the State House.

House Bill 4179 calls for the creation of a special commission to recommend a suitable memorial to honor Deborah Sampson, a Plympton resident who served in the Continental Army during the American war for independence. Sampson enlisted in the 4th Massachusetts Regiment in 1782 under the name of “Robert Shurtleff,” and holds the distinction of being the only woman to earn a full military pension for participation in the Continental Army.

Representative Kane feels Sampson’s story is not widely known but deserves to be told so Massachusetts residents can have a better understanding of the role women have played in our nation’s founding and their contributions throughout our country’s history. The bill passed the House of Representatives unanimously on November 6 by a vote of 158-0.

“When I was very young, my favorite book was *Patriots in Petticoats* by Patricia Edwards Clyne,” remarked Representative Kane. “The book was a collection of stories of American women, sometimes disguised as men, who played a vital role in the bitter fight for our country’s independence, and included in the book was the story of Deborah Sampson. Growing up, I imagined myself as one of these brave women, and now as an adult, I am deeply touched to help pass legislation honoring one of them.”

The 15-member commission will include six legislators and will be co-chaired by the House and Senate chairs of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs. Secretary of Veterans’ Services Francisco Ureña and Massachusetts Adjutant General Gary W. Keefe will also serve on the commission.

The remaining seven commission members will be appointed by Governor Charlie Baker. In addition to naming a woman veteran, the Governor’s appointees will include representatives of: the Women Veterans’ Network in the Department of Veterans’ Services; the Advisory Committee on Women Veterans; the Department of Massachusetts Veterans of Foreign Wars of The United States, Inc.; The American Legion, Department of Massachusetts, Inc.; the AMVETS Department of Massachusetts Service Foundation, Inc.; and the Disabled American Veterans, Department of Massachusetts, Inc.

The commission will be required to submit a report containing its recommendations to the Legislature by March 1, 2020.

House Bill 4179 now moves to the Senate for further action.

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