

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 1838

A RESOLUTION remembering Harry W. Colmery of Topeka on June 22 of each year
as the father of the G.I. Bill of Rights.

WHEREAS, The life of Harry Colmery of Topeka was marked by service to his country and its citizens. He earned a degree in law in 1916 from the University of Pittsburgh and joined the Army Air Service during World War I, serving as a first lieutenant at a time when military aviation was in its infancy; and

WHEREAS, Veterans of military service in World War I formed a fraternal organization called the American Legion. Unfortunately, our World War I veterans had only their medals to show for their valor and received little assistance in returning to civilian life; and

WHEREAS, After World War I, Harry Colmery actively contributed to the growth of the newly formed American Legion. He held several offices in the Legion and was elected National Commander in 1936; and

WHEREAS, The United States faced the return from World War II of what was to become an active duty force of 15,000,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines; and

WHEREAS, Harry Colmery, recognizing the potential effect of the return of such a large number of veterans to civilian life, set out to craft legislation seeking to ensure that these Americans who had fought for the democratic ideals of the nation and to preserve freedom would be able to fully participate in all of the opportunities the nation provided; and

WHEREAS, In December 1943, Harry Colmery scribbled on room stationery of the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C. the initial draft of the legislation that became the Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944, also known as the G.I. Bill of Rights. Virtually unmodified, it was signed into law by President Roosevelt on June 22, 1944; and

WHEREAS, The G.I. Bill of Rights changed America. More than 20 million veterans have benefited from this act and subsequent amendments. The original bill provided for subsistence payments for 52 weeks, four years of college tuition and books, and guaranteed loans for a home, farm or to start a business. It helped create our middle class and ensured our economic and intellectual dominance for the rest of the 20th century. Virtually millions of Americans earned college degrees, and the nation's veterans reared their families in homes which they owned: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Kansas: That the body remembers on June 22 of each year Harry W. Colmery of Topeka as the author of the G.I. Bill of Rights; and

Be it further resolved: That the Secretary of the Senate provide an enrolled copy of this resolution to Jack Quinlan, 3301 S.W. Van Buren, Topeka, KS 66611; the American Legion, Kansas State Headquarters, 1314-A S.W. Topeka Boulevard, Topeka, KS 66612; Mary Colmery, 2711 W. 67th Street, Mission Hills, KS 66208 and Harry Colmery, 480 S. Orange Road, Apt. 18, Pasadena, CA 91105.

Senate Resolution No. 1838 was sponsored by Senators Buntin, Adkins, Allen, Barnett, Barone, Betts, Brownlee, Brungardt, Buhler, Clark, Corbin, Donovan, Downey, Emler, Gilstrap, Goodwin, Haley, Helgerson, Hensley, Huelskamp, Jackson, Jordan, Journey, Kerr, Lee, Lyon, Morris, O'Connor, Oleen, Pugh, Salmans, Schmidt, Schodorf, Steineger, Taddiken, Teichman, Tyson, Umbarger, Vratil and Wagle.

I hereby certify that the above RESOLUTION originated in the SENATE, and was adopted by that body

President of the Senate.

Secretary of the Senate.