

Substitute for House Resolution No. 304.

A resolution to recognize and honor all of the athletes from around the country who represented the United States and the state of Michigan at the 2012 Summer Paralympic Games.

Whereas, The Paralympics are a global showcase for elite athletes with disabilities to participate in 20 different events that test speed, strength, endurance, and dexterity. More than just an athletic competition, the Paralympics serve as a vehicle to change societal perceptions of individuals with disabilities and to inspire the world with stories of courage, perseverance, determination, and triumph; and

Whereas, The Paralympics have a long and distinguished history, beginning in 1948, when a group of 16 British World War II veterans with spinal cord injuries participated in the Stoke Mandeville Games in England. Four years later, in 1952, Dutch veterans joined the competition and the International Stoke Mandeville Games were founded. These games would eventually become the Paralympics and in 1960, the inaugural Paralympic Games took place in Rome, Italy, with 400 athletes from 23 countries competing in 13 different events; and

Whereas, Since 1960, the Paralympic Games have taken place every four years, and the 2012 Summer Paralympic Games in London was the fourteenth Paralympics, and the largest in the history of the games, with an estimated 4,200 athletes from 164 nations participating in 20 sports. Of those athletes, 227 represented the United States, 12 of whom hailed from the State of Michigan; and

Whereas, Bryan Barten of Hart represented the United States in wheelchair tennis, advancing to the quarterfinals in his Paralympic debut; and

Whereas, Dale Dedrick of Ann Arbor represented the United States in equestrian and finished in the top 10 in the mixed individual freestyle test - Grade II; and

Whereas, Chris Hammer of Troy represented the United States in track and field and finished in the top ten in men's 1500 meter and the men's marathon races in the T46 classification; and

Whereas, Darlene Hunter of Commerce represented the United States in women's wheelchair basketball, helping lead her team to the bronze medal game; and

Whereas, Asya Miller of Lapeer represented the United States in goalball, helping to lead her team to the quarterfinals; and

Whereas, Jason Nelms of Emmett represented the United States in men's wheelchair basketball, helping his team to win a bronze medal; and

Whereas, Steven Peace of Albion represented the United States in cycling, finishing in the top five in the mixed T 1-2 road race; and

Whereas, Paul Schulte of Manchester represented the United States in men's wheelchair basketball, helping his team to win a bronze medal; and

Whereas, Matt Scott of Detroit represented the United States in men's wheelchair basketball, and scored 12 points against Great Britain to help his team win a bronze medal; and

Whereas, Scot Severn of Unionville represented the United States in track and field and won a bronze medal in men's shot put for the F52/53 classification; and

Whereas, Mary Stack of Ann Arbor represented the United States in powerlifting and finished fourth in the women's +82.50 kilogram competition; and

Whereas, Elizabeth Stone of Grand Rapids represented the United States in swimming and won bronze medals in the women's 100 meter butterfly and 100 meter backstroke in the S9 classification; and

Whereas, The athletes who competed in the Paralympics represent an indomitable spirit and incredible stories that move, inspire, and improve society, teaching the values of acceptance and appreciation for people with disabilities. By linking sport with social awareness, the Paralympics contribute to the development of a more equitable society that respects all individuals and breaks down barriers; and

Whereas, Through persistence and perseverance, Paralympic athletes achieve sporting excellence, thereby allowing individuals the world over to see that people with disabilities possess tremendous sporting skill and are capable of elite athletic performances. Thus, by pushing their physical abilities to the absolute limit and embodying the Paralympic values of courage and determination, these amazing athletes help contribute to a better, more inclusive world for all people; and

Whereas, It is with great pride that the state of Michigan recognizes the exceptional athletes who represented our great nation and state in the 2012 Summer Paralympic Games; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body recognize and honor all of the athletes from around the country who represented the United States and the State of Michigan at the 2012 Summer Paralympic Games. They, through their commitment to athletic excellence, courage, and determination, have proved themselves to be among the greatest athletes in the world, and, in so doing, have shown themselves worthy of representing the United States in the 2012 Summer Paralympic Games.