

Rep. Zorn offered the following resolution:

**House Resolution No. 390.**

A resolution to urge the U.S. Department of Defense to provide toll-free calling to active duty military men and women serving overseas, so that they may call family members in the U.S. without cost.

Whereas, Active duty military men and women and their families face a number of financial and emotional struggles as a result of being internationally deployed. Increased costs realized by these families due to deployment include the cost of staying in touch with family and loved ones in the United States; and

Whereas, Technology has provided a number of choices to connect with family including cell phones, satellite phones, and the internet. However, these options require internet connections not available to all service members or are cost prohibitive. Some cell phone plans cost as much as \$2.50 per minute for each party no matter who initiates the call. A 10-minute call may cost as much as \$50.00; and

Whereas, Connecting with family and friends on a regular basis is good for mental health and morale. However, stressing over financial problems, especially ones created by trying to stay in touch with loved ones, causes difficulty in focusing on the task at hand; and

Whereas, The Department of Defense currently provides phone centers at which soldiers are allowed limited, free 15-minute "morale calls" for those who are located on a base. Low-cost calling cards are also available, although families must ensure the proper card is purchased for the proper phone service. None of the available options is as stress-free and easy for the service member as regular access to toll-free calling; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we urge the U.S. Department of Defense to provide toll-free calling to active duty military men and women serving overseas, so that they may call family members in the U.S. without cost; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the U.S. Secretary of Defense and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.