

Reps. Slezak, Booher, Lisa Brown, Caul, Constan, Crawford, Daley, Dean, Denby, DeShazor, Geiss, Gonzales, Green, Haase, Haines, Hansen, Haugh, Haveman, Kurtz, LeBlanc, Liss, Lori, Lund, Mayes, Moore, Polidori, Proos, Wayne Schmidt, Schuitmaker, Paul Scott, Sheltroun, Spade, Stanley, Tlaib, Tyler, Ball, Marleau, Meekhof, Neumann, Pearce, Rogers and Walsh offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 190.

A resolution honoring Robert Heft, the designer of the United States 50-star flag.

Whereas, Robert “Bob” G. Heft was born in Saginaw, Michigan in 1942. He was the designer of the 50-star flag, and has one of the proposed designs for a 51-star flag for the United States of America; and

Whereas, He designed the current United States flag in 1958 while living with his grandparents in Lancaster, Ohio. He was 17-years-old at the time and did the flag design as a class project. He unstitched the blue field from a family 48-star flag, sewed in a new field, and used iron-on white fabric to add 100 hand-cut stars, 50 on each side of the blue canton; and

Whereas, He originally received a B- for the project. After discussing the grade with his high school teacher, Stanley Pratt, it was agreed that if the flag was accepted by Congress, the grade would be reconsidered. Heft’s flag design was chosen and adopted by presidential proclamation after Alaska and before Hawaii were admitted into the union in 1959. According to Heft, his teacher kept to their agreement and changed his grade to an A for the project; and

Whereas, When Alaska and Hawaii were being considered for statehood, more than 1,500 designs were spontaneously submitted to President Dwight D. Eisenhower by Americans all over the country. Although some of them were 49-star versions, the vast majority were 50-star proposals. At least three, and probably more, of these designs were identical to the present design of the 50-star flag. These designs are in the Eisenhower Presidential Archives in Abilene, Kansas. Only a small fraction of them have ever been published; and

Whereas, After graduating from college, Heft became a high school teacher and later a college professor, and he also served as mayor of Napoleon, Ohio for 28 years. After retiring from teaching, he became a motivational speaker. Heft was a longtime member of the Harvey Spaulding Toastmasters Club in Saginaw. He earned the nickname “father time” as he often filled the role of timer during meetings. While he was seen as one of their own, other members of the club were always honored when Heft would deliver a speech at a meeting; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of the legislative body honor Robert Heft, the designer of the United States 50-star flag, who died on December 12, 2009.