

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 98-4682, by Representatives Sehlin, Veloria and D. Schmidt

WHEREAS, 1998 marks the one hundredth anniversary of the USS Olympia's entry into Manila as Admiral George Dewey's Flagship in the United States Navy's Far East Squadron, firing the first shot at the famous Battle of Manila Bay, the Philippine Islands, on May 1, 1898, freeing the Philippines from Spanish rule; and

WHEREAS, The battle effectively erased the Spanish fleet and heralded the arrival of the United States as a significant world naval power; and

WHEREAS, The Olympia also made visible the American presence across Asian and Caribbean waters; and

WHEREAS, The Olympia helped safely escort supply convoys across the Atlantic during World War I, and delivered American forces to Marmansk, Russia in June 1918 as part of an Allied plan to contain the Russian Revolution; and

WHEREAS, The Olympia helped police the eastern Mediterranean and Adriatic Seas, and brought much needed medical aid and supplies to sufferers of typhus and small pox in Regusa, Dalmatia; and

WHEREAS, One of the Olympia's final and most honorable acts of service was the delivery of the body and casket of the "Unknown Soldier" from World War I to be entombed at Arlington and remembered and mourned by generations of Americans; and

WHEREAS, Despite four years of service, the Olympia had no silver service set, citizens of Washington sprang into a fund-raising frenzy and were able to present the Olympia with a stunning silver service set upon return to the United States in New York Harbor in September 1899; and

WHEREAS, After decommissioning, the silver service was moved by the Navy to another vessel; and

WHEREAS, The Navy returned the silver service set to the City of Olympia and State of Washington in 1930; and

WHEREAS, The silver service is still on display, and used daily in our governor's mansion; and

WHEREAS, The Olympia, after decommissioning on December 9, 1922, remains the oldest American steel ship afloat from America's turn-of-the-century "white fleet" and has survived vandals and time, and been restored to its original configuration as a symbolic museum ship at Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, On September 11, 1957, the Olympia was transferred to the Cruiser Olympia Association as the last living memorial of the Spanish-American War at Penn's Landing, Philadelphia Harbor; and

WHEREAS, Since 1984 a new USS Olympia has served to defend the freedom of the Pacific, the fast attack submarine and her crew have served with honor and distinction, inspiring a sense of national pride and debate amongst its namesake citizens;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives officially celebrate the centennial of the Battle of Manila Bay, and express its gratitude to the sailors and marines who served and sacrificed with honor to propel the USS Olympia to the forefront of the nation's naval traditions. We also honor the women and men of the United States Armed Forces who have actively served on, and in support of, both USS Olympia vessels.

I hereby certify this to be a true and correct copy of
Resolution 4682 adopted by the House of Representatives
February 25, 1998.

Timothy A. Martin, Chief Clerk