

1 A RESOLUTION honoring Dr. Ephraim McDowell and encouraging the Joint
2 Committee of Congress on the Library to keep the statue of Dr. Ephraim McDowell on
3 display.

4 WHEREAS, each of the 50 states have contributed up to two statues to the National
5 Statuary Hall in the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C.; and

6 WHEREAS, the National Statuary Hall is meant to be used to honor individuals
7 from each state who are illustrious for their historic renown or for distinguished civic or
8 military service; and

9 WHEREAS, Kentucky placed statues of Henry Clay and Dr. Ephraim McDowell in
10 the National Statuary Hall in 1929; and

11 WHEREAS, Dr. McDowell was the son of Samuel McDowell, one of the drafters
12 of the Kentucky Constitution and one of the electors of Isaac Shelby, the first governor of
13 Kentucky; and

14 WHEREAS, Dr. McDowell lived in Danville, Kentucky, from 1784 to his death in
15 1830, and his most notable achievements all occurred while in Kentucky; and

16 WHEREAS, Dr. McDowell studied for three years under Dr. Alexander
17 Humphreys, who was an accomplished and respected physician and teacher who also
18 taught medicine to President William Henry Harrison; and

19 WHEREAS, Dr. McDowell attended medical lectures at the University of
20 Edinburgh, Scotland; and

21 WHEREAS, on Christmas morning, 1809, Dr. McDowell performed an abdominal
22 surgery on Jane Todd Crawford to remove a 22.5 pound tumor from one of Ms.
23 Crawford's ovaries; and

24 WHEREAS, before this day in 1809, every known attempt at abdominal surgery
25 had ended in peritonitis—inflammation and infection of the abdomen—and death; and

26 WHEREAS, a 2004 study of literature concerning Dr. McDowell by Dr. Biemann
27 Othersen found that Dr. McDowell was universally considered to be unusually

1 meticulous, neat, and clean in his work; and

2 WHEREAS, surgery in 1809 had to be conducted without any sort of anesthetic or
3 antiseptis, which increased the difficulty and risk of adverse outcomes in even simple
4 surgical procedures; and

5 WHEREAS, Ms. Crawford survived her abdominal surgery and lived for 32 more
6 years, making her the first-ever survivor of an abdominal surgery; and

7 WHEREAS, Dr. McDowell wrote in his description of the procedure that "in five
8 days I visited her, and much to my astonishment found her making up her bed," indicating
9 an exceptionally quick and uncomplicated recovery; and

10 WHEREAS, Dr. McDowell also perfected the modern surgical technique of
11 lithotomy, the removal of urinary stones from the bladder; and

12 WHEREAS, after making history as having performed the first-ever successful
13 abdominal surgery and ovariectomy, now more commonly called an ovariectomy, Dr.
14 McDowell also operated on James K. Polk, who would later become the 11th President of
15 the United States, and successfully removed a urinary stone and repaired a hernia; and

16 WHEREAS, Dr. McDowell also played a prominent role in his communities; was a
17 founder, original incorporator, and member of the primary board of trustees of Centre
18 College in Danville, Kentucky; was a member of the Philadelphia Medical Society; and
19 founded the Trinity Episcopal Church in Danville, Kentucky, by donating the land for its
20 first building; and

21 WHEREAS, Dr. McDowell's achievements have been recognized by the erection of
22 a monument by the Medical Society of Kentucky; the issuance of a 4-cent
23 commemorative stamp by the U.S. Post Office on the 150th anniversary of Dr.
24 McDowell's surgery on Ms. Crawford; the designation as a National Historic Landmark
25 of Dr. McDowell's house, office, and apothecary, which are preserved as a museum; and
26 the designation of the hospital in Danville, Kentucky, as the Ephraim McDowell Regional
27 Medical Center; and

1 WHEREAS, Dr. McDowell was an exceptional citizen of Kentucky, who made
2 great contributions to the global practice of medicine and who greatly improved his home
3 community in Danville; and

4 WHEREAS, for his many contributions to the Commonwealth of Kentucky and to
5 the global practice of medicine, Dr. McDowell is properly recognized as one of the most
6 exceptional and commendable citizens of Kentucky and is worthy of honor and
7 recognition;

8 NOW, THEREFORE,

9 *Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the*
10 *Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

11 ➔Section 1. The House of Representative hereby reaffirms its commendation of
12 and respect for Dr. Ephraim McDowell and all of his contributions to the field of
13 medicine.

14 ➔Section 2. The House of Representatives hereby respectfully requests that the
15 Joint Committee on the Library of Congress retain the statue of Dr. Ephraim McDowell
16 in the National Statuary Hall collection.

17 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the House is directed to transmit a copy of this
18 Resolution and notice of its adoption to the President of the United States Senate, the
19 Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Joint Committee of Congress
20 on the Library, and to each member of the Kentucky Congressional Delegation.