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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, a 2004 study of literature concerning Dr. McDowell by Dr. Biemann Othersen found that Dr. McDowell was universally considered to be unusually
meticulous, neat, and clean in his work; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, Dr. McDowell's achievements have been recognized by the erection of a monument by the Medical Society of Kentucky; the issuance of a 4-cent commemorative stamp by the U.S. Post Office on the 150th anniversary of Dr. McDowell's surgery on Ms. Crawford; the designation as a National Historic Landmark of Dr. McDowell's house, office, and apothecary, which are preserved as a museum; and the designation of the hospital in Danville, Kentucky, as the Ephraim McDowell Regional Medical Center; and
WHEREAS, Dr. McDowell was an exceptional citizen of Kentucky, who made
great contributions to the global practice of medicine and who greatly improved his home
community in Danville; and

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

NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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

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

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