

Madam Chair Healey and distinguished members of the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee, I am Penny Collins, past Mid-Atlantic Regional President of the Fleet Reserve Association representing Navy, Marine and, my own branch, the Coast Guard here in Maryland and three other states.

As a member of the Coast Guard I felt honored by my fellow shipmates to be in their company and work side-by-side in protecting our nation's waterways. Returning to civilian life, well to the general public, besides the occasional "thank you for your service," was not as fulfilling as during my service years.

Military personnel, especially career members, do not join or remain for the monetary compensation. While this is a matter of choice, putting your life on the line daily still, in my opinion, deserves more than a passing compliment.

The 60,000 women who served honorably in our armed forces branches as well as the National Oceanographic Atmospheric Administration and the Public Health Service deserve appropriate recognition.

This is why the concept of a Women Veterans Memorial is important to us. It not only honor our time in serving our country, this tribute validates our past.

As a Maryland resident I greatly appreciate Delegate Bagnall's foresight on recognizing our years of serving this great nation and humbly request a favorable report on HJ 4.

Gratefully,

Penny Collins
Secretary-Treasurer
THE FLEET RESERVE ASSOCIATION
Branch 24
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