

**Congresswoman Betty McCollum**

Floor Statement

Honoring and congratulating the Minnesota National Guard  
on its 150th anniversary (H. Con. Res. 371)

April 5, 2006

**Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the brave men and women who for the past 150 years have served Minnesota and America as members of the Minnesota National Guard. I would also like to honor the family members who have stood by our guardsmen and women during times of peace and war.**

**The men and women of the Minnesota National Guard have contributed to the freedom and security of this country from their heroism in the Civil War to their service today, in Iraq. The Minnesota National Guard was key in ensuring victory for the Union forces at Gettysburg, and saw battle in the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, and Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.**

**These men and women have also worked to help keep and support the peace in Bosnia, Kosovo and Croatia.**

**Since the September 11<sup>th</sup>, over eleven thousand members of the Minnesota National Guard have been activated to help serve and protect Minnesota and the United States.**

**Today, members of the Minnesota National Guard are serving both within the state, and around the world. In Minnesota, members of the National Guard are critical to helping Minnesotans protect their homes and rebuild their lives after flooding in the Red River Valley.**

**Last month, I had the honor of attending, along with Congressman Peterson, a send-off celebration for over two thousand six hundred members of the Minnesota National Guard being deployed to Iraq from Camp Shelby, Mississippi. The sacrifice these men and women are making serving our country, being separated from their families and loved ones, is to be honored and respected.**

**It has been my privilege to work closely with the Minnesota National Guard in my District to maintain the Arden Hills Army Training Site, as well as the Air National Guard's Holman Field facility. These two facilities are essential to keeping our community strong and the Guard prepared.**

**Mr. Speaker, the history of the Minnesota National Guard is a proud and distinguished history. Farmers, factory workers, policemen, students, doctors and business owners, for the past 150 years, have become citizen soldiers, serving their country and their community.**

**Every Minnesotan and all of America owes a debt of gratitude to the brave men and women who serve our country today and in years past.**

**Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I yield back the balance of my time.**