

The Honorable Chairman Uecker, and members of the State and Local Government Committee: I am Lt. Col./USAF (Retired) Robert F. Holliker Jr. and am writing to provide testimony on the proposed Resolution (H.R.C. 26), to recognize 'The BratPin' for what it was designed for - to Recognize and Honor the service of Military Children; Military 'Brats' if you will.

I myself, served as an Air Force Brat from age 4 until I went on Active Duty at age 21. I moved 12 times, and attended 11 schools over those 17 years. I attended 4 high schools in 3 countries. The longest we lived anywhere was 3 years, at best.

I was always told that my dad's promotions would be affected by my behavior and as such, was held to very 'high standards' as a kid. Almost 'rigid' you might say. During my tenure as a Military Brat I continually walked away from friends, from schools and homes. I got good at 'walking away' you might say. I learned the value of 'culture diversity' from "living it" over the years, in 5 countries and numerous states. I learned "Yes, Sir," and "No, Ma'am" at a very young age, and still use the terms today. I would dare not! I am fiercely patriotic and will defend my country to my dying breath. I learned this as a kid; not from the oath I took upon going on Active Duty. I already knew it!

My experience as a Military Brat is really no different than millions of others who have served, and I proudly represent today. For the most part, we are all very proud of our service, and most of us would do it all again - in a heartbeat!

"The BratPin" originated as a concept I presented to US Representative Bob Latta in December 2009. He, in turn, introduced legislation to create a 'Congressional Lapel Pin,' to recognize and honor Military Kids for their service to our nation. (Initially, H.R. 5333, 2010). That legislation, in one form or another, has 'sat in committee' now for over 6 years, going nowhere. So, two years ago, an interviewer asked me, "Why don't you design a pin yourself (for the stated purpose). So, I along with a couple-3 other Brats, came up with "The BratPin." What is totally amazing is "The BratPin" is bringing Brats together; helping us to discover 'who we are' and allowing us to share the pride we harbor for being Brats! It is slowly accomplishing what it was designed for from the very beginning...

Proceeds from BratPin sales will eventually be going over to a non-profit organization, Brats Without Borders, to advocate and support the needs of Military Kids today.

Your favorable support and endorsement of this proposed resolution will be greatly appreciated by millions of us who continue to quietly serve today - and take pride in having served as Military Brats!

Thank you,

Robert F. Holliker Jr.
Air Force Brat