

107TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. CON. RES. 157

---

---

## CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Recognizing and honoring Joseph Henry for his significant and distinguished role in the development and advancement of science and electricity.

107TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. CON. RES. 157

---

## CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas Joseph Henry was born December 17, 1797, in Albany, New York, the son of William and Ann Henry;

Whereas Joseph Henry served as an apprentice to John Doty, a watchmaker and jeweler, in preparation for attendance at the Albany Academy;

Whereas from 1819 to 1822, Joseph Henry attended advanced classes at the Albany Academy and, in the spring

of 1826, was elected to the professorship of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy in the Albany Academy;

Whereas Joseph Henry revolutionized scientific education by using experiment-based teaching methods at the Albany Academy, and in 1829 was awarded an honorary Masters degree by Union College, despite having no formal college education;

Whereas Joseph Henry conducted many experiments with electromagnets, which led to his successful design and construction of an electromagnet capable of lifting 750 pounds;

Whereas Joseph Henry continued to improve upon the development of the electromagnet, building an electromagnet for Yale University in 1831 that was capable of lifting 2,300 pounds, and another electromagnet, known as “Big Ben”, that was capable of lifting 3,500 pounds, which was, at the time that it was built in 1833, the most powerful electromagnet ever built;

Whereas in January 1831, Joseph Henry helped lay the groundwork for the development of the electromagnetic telegraph by distinguishing between quantity and intensity magnets and by publishing those findings in the American Journal of Science;

Whereas the modern practical unit of induction is commonly referred to as the “Henry” in honor of Joseph Henry’s research and discoveries regarding self-induction;

Whereas Joseph Henry, while conducting research at the Albany Academy, invented an electromagnetic motor made of a horizontally poised bar electromagnet that would rock back and forth as the current through it was automatically reversed;

Whereas Joseph Henry, while serving as Professor of Natural Philosophy in the College of New Jersey at Princeton (currently known as “Princeton University”), conducted experiments from 1838 to 1842 which laid the theoretical groundwork for modern step-up and step-down transformers;

Whereas, on December 14, 1846, Joseph Henry was selected as the first Secretary and Director of the Smithsonian Institution;

Whereas, in his first report to the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, Joseph Henry proclaimed that the purpose of the Smithsonian Institution, the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men, would be best achieved by supporting original research and providing for the wide distribution of the most recent findings in the various fields of natural sciences;

Whereas in 1850 Joseph Henry, as Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, established the system of receiving weather reports by telegraph and utilizing such reports to predict weather conditions and issue storm warnings;

Whereas in 1869 Congress established a national weather bureau upon the recommendation of Joseph Henry;

Whereas Joseph Henry was appointed as a member of the Light House Board in 1852, and served as its president from 1871 until his death in 1878;

Whereas Joseph Henry was an original member of the National Academy of Sciences, its vice-president in 1866, and its president from 1868 until his death in 1878;

Whereas Joseph Henry died in the District of Columbia on May 13, 1878;

Whereas a memorial service was held in honor of Joseph Henry on January 16, 1879, in the Hall of the House of Representatives, and was attended by the President, Vice President, members of the President's Cabinet, Justices of the Supreme Court, Members of Congress, and members of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution; and

Whereas the memory of Joseph Henry was honored at the opening of the Library of Congress in 1890 by including a statue of Joseph Henry among the 16 bronze portrait statues on display which represent human development and civilization: Now, therefore, be it

- 1       *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
- 2   *concurring)*, That Congress recognizes and honors Joseph
- 3   Henry for his significant and distinguished role in the de-
- 4   velopment and advancement of science and electricity.

Passed the House of Representatives November 27, 2001.

Attest:

*Clerk.*