

1 **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION HONORING**

2 **HELEN FOSTER SNOW**

3 2020 GENERAL SESSION

4 STATE OF UTAH

5 **Chief Sponsor: Eric K. Hutchings**

6 Senate Sponsor: Jani Iwamoto

8 **LONG TITLE**

9 **General Description:**

10 This concurrent resolution honors the life and service of Helen Foster Snow.

11 **Highlighted Provisions:**

12 This resolution:

13 ▶ recognizes the life of Helen Foster Snow in the United States and China;

14 ▶ honors the work Helen Foster Snow created when she served as a war
15 correspondent in China;

16 ▶ recognizes the significant role Helen Foster Snow played in bearing witness to
17 Chinese revolutionary leaders;

18 ▶ recognizes Helen Foster Snow as a talented journalist and a principal leader in the
19 creation of Chinese cooperatives;

20 ▶ commemorates the awards and honors she received; and

21 ▶ honors her legacy and recognizes August, 2021, as the 90th anniversary of when
22 Helen Foster Snow moved to China.

23 **Special Clauses:**

24 None

26 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

27 WHEREAS, Helen Foster Snow was born in 1907 in Cedar City to John Moody Foster



28 and Hannah Davis;

29 WHEREAS, Helen Foster Snow was a descendant of Mormon pioneers and was raised
30 as a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints;

31 WHEREAS, Helen Foster Snow, moved to Salt Lake City to live with her grandmother
32 and aunt to attend West High School where she became the editor of the school's yearbook and
33 was elected the vice president of the student government, the highest position for a female
34 student at that time;

35 WHEREAS, upon graduation, Helen Foster Snow attended the University of Utah;

36 WHEREAS, in 1931, Helen Foster Snow moved to China to pursue writing and
37 immediately met Edgar Snow, the first American journalist to give a full account of the history
38 of the Chinese Communist Party and author of the book *Red Star Over China*, and who would
39 later become her husband;

40 WHEREAS, less than one week after Helen Foster Snow traveled to China, she
41 reported on the Yangtze River flood, which killed over 600,000 people and destroyed 12
42 million homes;

43 WHEREAS, Edgar Snow helped Helen Foster Snow get a press card to report on the
44 Japanese invasion of Shanghai;

45 WHEREAS, Helen Foster Snow became a journalist who reported from China in the
46 1930s under the name "Nym Wales" on the Chinese Civil War, the Korean Independence
47 movement, and the Second Sino-Japanese War;

48 WHEREAS, Chiang Kai-shek, the leader of the National Government of China,
49 maintained a policy that focused on fighting the communists within China, rather than the
50 external threat of the Japanese;

51 WHEREAS, in 1935, Helen Foster Snow played a significant role in orchestrating the
52 December 9th Movement, whereby 800 students marched in Beijing to demand that the
53 Chinese government actively resist Japanese aggression;

54 WHEREAS, the December 9th protest inspired 65 other demonstrations in 32 cities
55 across China with about 10,000 student participants, which helped turn the tide of Chinese
56 opinion and support against Japanese aggression;

57 WHEREAS, in October 1936, Helen Foster Snow interviewed Zhang Xueliang, deputy
58 commander-in-chief of the National Government, and reported his desire to work with the

59 communists to fight the invading Japanese forces;

60 WHEREAS, two months later, General Zhang Xueliang detained Chiang Kai-shek in
61 what is today known as the Xi'an Incident, and forced him to align with the communists against
62 the Japanese;

63 WHEREAS, in 1937, in order to understand the revolutionary movement of the
64 communists, Helen Foster Snow was the second foreign woman and eighth foreign journalist to
65 travel to the city of Yan'an, the location of the Chinese Communist Party's headquarters, to
66 interview prominent communist leaders, including Mao Zedong, Zhu De, and Zhou Enlai;

67 WHEREAS, Helen Foster Snow made it a priority to interview and report on the lives
68 of the female leaders of the Communist Party in Yan'an, who provided her with detailed
69 information of the issues the Communist Party faced and resulted in her famous book *Inside*
70 *Red China*, a companion of her husband's *Red Star Over China*;

71 WHEREAS, these two books, immediately after their publication, inspired the
72 pilgrimage of thousands of young Chinese to go to Yan'an to seek a pathway for a united front
73 to save China from Japanese aggression;

74 WHEREAS, in 1938, Helen Foster Snow was a principal organizer and creator of the
75 Chinese industrial cooperatives and the "Gung ho" movement, which created jobs for millions
76 of destitute individuals driven from farms and workshops into the interior, quickly rehabilitated
77 the industrial bases that were lost to Japan, and laid the social and economic foundation for
78 rebuilding post-war China;

79 WHEREAS, "gung ho" is Chinese for "work together", which represents all peoples
80 working together in cooperation;

81 WHEREAS, Helen Foster Snow created support and financial backing in the United
82 States for the Chinese cooperatives and eventually recruited then First Lady of the United
83 States, Eleanor Roosevelt, as a member on the American Board of Sponsors for the
84 cooperatives;

85 WHEREAS, after the cooperative's first year in existence, 1,284 cooperatives were
86 functioning with 15,625 members, with support from both the nationalist and communist
87 governments;

88 WHEREAS, Helen Foster Snow received strong support for the cooperatives from
89 Soong Ching Ling, Soong Ai Ling, and Soong Mei Ling, who were among China's most

90 significant political figures of the early 20th century;

91 WHEREAS, in 1941, Helen Foster Snow published *China Builds for Democracy*,
92 which created publicity and support for cooperatives in the United States and worldwide,
93 including India, Burma, and Japan;

94 WHEREAS, Helen Foster Snow was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1981 and
95 1982 for her world view on peace and progress in the world, and for her creation of the "gung
96 ho" movement;

97 WHEREAS, in 1993, Helen Foster Snow was the first recipient of the China Writers
98 Association's literary award;

99 WHEREAS, in 1996, Helen Foster Snow was the first American and fifth person ever
100 to be honored by the Chinese government as a Friendship Ambassador, one of China's highest
101 honors offered to a foreigner;

102 WHEREAS, Helen Foster Snow was an exceptional Utahn who brought her pioneer
103 heritage to make a positive impact on the world stage;

104 WHEREAS, Helen Foster Snow, daughter of a suffragist, was a fearless pioneer who
105 helped push the bounds for political roles for women in the early 20th century;

106 WHEREAS, Helen Foster Snow wrote 60 books and 27 manuscripts, of which only
107 seven books were published in the United States, including her 1984 autobiography, *My China*
108 *Years: A Memoir*;

109 WHEREAS, after her death in 1997, Helen's family donated unpublished manuscripts
110 and thousands of documents, letters, and photographs to the Brigham Young University library
111 and the Hoover Institution Library and Archives at Stanford University;

112 WHEREAS, Helen Foster Snow was commemorated in an official Chinese memorial
113 service in the Great Hall of the People, a state building at the western edge of Tiananmen
114 Square in Beijing, an honor rarely bestowed upon foreigners;

115 WHEREAS, there is a wing in the Communist Eighth Route Army Museum in Xi'an
116 dedicated to the memory of Helen Foster Snow;

117 WHEREAS, in 2009, the United States-China Cultural Exchange Committee placed a
118 seven foot bronze statue of Helen Foster Snow in the Main Street Park in her home town of
119 Cedar City;

120 WHEREAS, in 2011, students and faculty from Southern Utah University began a

121 collaborative project with Chinese musicians, dancers, and artists to create a dance drama
122 based on Helen Foster Snow's life, which was performed in multiple locations across China;

123 WHEREAS, although Helen Foster Snow was sympathetic to the early revolutionary
124 movement in China, she was never a sympathizer or member of the Chinese or American
125 Communist Party;

126 WHEREAS, Senator Orrin Hatch summarized the ultimate aspiration of Helen Foster
127 Snow at the time of her death as, "Mrs. Snow built a bridge of goodwill between the hearts of
128 the Americans to the hearts of the Chinese people. Let her life stand as a reminder that what
129 lies behind the very different political systems of the world are real people whose hearts and
130 minds are not so far apart."; and

131 WHEREAS, August, 2021, will be the 90th anniversary of when Helen Foster Snow
132 went to China:

133 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Legislature, the Governor concurring
134 therein, honors the memory and contributions of Helen Foster Snow and her legacy as a
135 journalist, author, and visionary, who dedicated her life as a bridge-builder between the people
136 of the United States and China; and

137 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor commemorate
138 August, 2021, as the 90th anniversary of Helen Foster Snow's first arrival in China.