

ONE HUNDRED FIFTH LEGISLATURE

FIRST SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION 121**

Introduced by Scheer, 19.

WHEREAS, with the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s, western and eastern European nations experienced a vast thaw in their previously austere relationships, with new opportunities for cooperation and diplomatic, security, and economic ties between the United States and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies and the prior Warsaw Pact partners; and

WHEREAS, identifying the critical need to rebuild shared democratic and military aspirations with the newly independent nations of Eastern Europe as a priority, the National Guard State Partnership Plan Program (SPP) was established in 1993 in response to the changed political and military situations; and

WHEREAS, the SPP sought to link the National Guards of states in the United States with Ministries of Defense of the emerging democratic nations of Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia in cooperative activities of mutual benefit; and

WHEREAS, the program has grown worldwide to include 73 unique security partnerships involving 79 nations and 54 participating U.S. states and territories; and

WHEREAS, in 1993 the Nebraska National Guard joined a previously established partnership between the Czech Republic and Texas. In 1999, the partnership evolved to include all aspects of the public and private sector as the Czech Republic prepared to be accepted into NATO; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, the SPP between Nebraska, Texas, and the Czech Republic, involved 34 separate exchanges between the Czech military and members of the Nebraska and Texas National Guards; and

WHEREAS, a special delegation from the Czech Republic is visiting Nebraska

on May 3-4, 2017, including: Martin Stropnický, Czech Republic Minister of Defense; Major General Petr Mikulénka, Deputy Chief of the General Staff; Mr. Jan Jires, Defense Policy Director, Ministry of Defense; Bořek Lizec, Consulate General of the Czech Republic; and other distinguished guests; and

WHEREAS, Wilber, Nebraska, is the Czech Capitol of the U.S.A., home of the Miss Czech-Slovak U.S. Pageant, and home of the National Czech Festival, in its 56th year in 2017, which serves as another valuable and treasured tie between Nebraskans and their Czech heritage.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA, FIRST SESSION:

1. That the Legislature recognizes the significance of the close ties between Nebraska and the Czech Republic through the State Partnership Plan and wishes to express its appreciation for the honor of this visit by the distinguished diplomatic and military guests from the Czech Republic.