



HR0318

LRB101 12138 ALS 59727 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives wish to congratulate Debra Nauman, the founder of Giant Steps, on her years of tenacious work for the autism community; and

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WHEREAS, Debra Nauman, a single mother with two children on the autism spectrum, began her journey 23 years ago; motivated by her son, Riley, who was not receiving the services he needed at school to effectively learn, she realized he needed a program that understood him and autism; her dynamic personality led her to start Giant Steps, the first school in Illinois for students with autism, in 1996; and

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WHEREAS, Without alternatives for programming, Debra Nauman turned to her local legislator, former U.S. Representative Judy Biggert, for assistance; subsequently, former State Representative Patti Bellock continued to support Giant Steps; with their help, the initial funding to start Giant Steps was secured through the Illinois General Assembly, making Riley the first student at Giant Steps Day School; and

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WHEREAS, Today, Giant Steps serves over 200 students and adults from across northern Illinois; and

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1           WHEREAS, Giant Steps autism services now include the  
2 Transition Day School program in Lisle, where there are 165  
3 students attending from over 60 public school districts in  
4 northern Illinois; and

5           WHEREAS, The Canopy Adult Day Program located in Sugar  
6 Grove provides vital continuing education for adults with  
7 autism who have aged out of the public school system; and

8           WHEREAS, Christine's Dream Equestrian Center at Rich  
9 Harvest Farms in Sugar Grove offers therapeutic riding lessons  
10 and vocational opportunities focused on experiential education  
11 and recreational skill development for students and adults from  
12 across northern Illinois; and

13           WHEREAS, The Recreation After School Center in Lisle is a  
14 program that addresses two needs for families; first, it  
15 provides engaging and educational and community opportunities  
16 for students and adults after school; second, it provides camps  
17 for students during holidays that offer exciting and engaging  
18 activities designed to support learning; and

19           WHEREAS, These programs have helped countless individuals  
20 living with autism by offering new educational and therapeutic  
21 programs and enriching their daily lives, and Giant Steps has  
22 grown into a national leader in the world of autism; therefore,

1 be it

2 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
3 HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
4 we congratulate Debra Nauman on her years of untiring work as  
5 the founder of Giant Steps and commend all she has done to help  
6 families across the State who are living with autism; and be it  
7 further

8 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
9 presented to Debra Nauman as an expression of our esteem and  
10 respect.