



HR0179

LRB100 11642 MST 22459 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of Chief
4 Special Warfare Operator William Ryan Owens, a Central Illinois
5 native and Navy SEAL, who paid the ultimate sacrifice for his
6 country on January 28, 2017 while on a raid in Yemen; and

7 WHEREAS, Chief Owens was born on March 5, 1980 at Methodist
8 Hospital in Peoria; he lived with his parents, William Owens, a
9 Henry native, and the late Patty Westerfer Owens, a Lacon
10 native, west of Henry; he was baptized in St. Patrick's Church
11 in Camp Grove; his father was in the apprenticeship program at
12 Caterpillar; the family then moved to Ft. Lauderdale, Florida,
13 where his father worked with the police force; and

14 WHEREAS, In the 1990s, Chief Owens returned to Central
15 Illinois and graduated from Illinois Valley Central High School
16 in 1998, where he participated in football and baseball; and

17 WHEREAS, After high school, Chief Owens applied for the
18 Navy SEAL program in Coronado, Colorado; he met Carryn Wiegand
19 while he was stationed in Washington, D.C. and they were
20 married in the chapel at Arlington National Cemetery; they have
21 three children, Brooke, Luke, and Taryn; and

1 WHEREAS, Chief Owens was a highly decorated sailor; he
2 earned two Bronze Stars with a combat "V" device, a Combat
3 Action Ribbon, a Navy/Marine Corps Achievement Medal, and two
4 Joint Service Commendation Medals with a combat "V" device; and

5 WHEREAS, On the night of January 28, 2017, Chief Owens was
6 tragically killed in a raid in Yemen, which left three other
7 SEALs injured; and

8 WHEREAS, Defense Secretary James Mattis praised Owens
9 saying, "The United States would not long exist were it not for
10 the selfless commitment of such warriors. I thank our gallant
11 troops and their families for their dedication to protecting
12 this nation, and I pass our respects to Ryan's family in this
13 most difficult time."; and

14 WHEREAS, Chief Owens will be missed by his friends, his
15 family, and a grateful nation; therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
17 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we,
18 along with his family and friends, mourn the passing of Chief
19 Special Warfare Operator Owens William Ryan Owens, and extend
20 our sincere condolences to his family, friends, and all who
21 knew and loved him; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
2 presented to the family of Chief Owens as an expression of our
3 deepest sympathy.