



HR0617

LRB100 14422 MST 29552 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Billy Lawless, a native of Galway, the unofficial capital of western Ireland, has always been interested in politics, and ran as a Fine Gael candidate for the Galway City Council in 1991; after being defeated by the future President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, he moved from Galway to Chicago in 1998 to continue his successful career as a hospitality proprietor; and

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WHEREAS, Billy Lawless is now the owner of numerous dining places in the Chicago area; in this capacity he began his service in 2010 as a member of the Executive Committee of the Illinois Restaurant Association Board of Directors; his fourth place of hospitality, Chicago's Beacon Tavern, opened in May of 2016; and

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WHEREAS, Continuing his interest in political action, Billy Lawless has become a leading voice in Illinois for Irish-American relations and for the well-being of Irish men and women living in the United States; and

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WHEREAS, During the course of this advocacy, Billy Lawless was honored by Chicago Irish Immigrant Support in April of 2011; and

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1 WHEREAS, In honor of his continued support for closer
2 relations between Illinois and Ireland, and particularly
3 between the sister cities of Chicago and the City of Galway,
4 Billy Lawless was granted the status of Honorary Freeman of the
5 City of Galway in December of 2014; he was awarded an honorary
6 doctorate in June of 2015 by the National University of Ireland
7 at Galway; and

8 WHEREAS, On May 11, 2016, Taoiseach Enda Kenny honored
9 Billy Lawless with the unprecedented status of overseas member
10 of the "Seanad Eireann", the Irish Senate in Dublin; and

11 WHEREAS, In his joint capacity as a successful business
12 person and an advocate for the immigrant community, Billy
13 Lawless has served as co-founder and chairman of the Chicago
14 Celts for Immigration Reform, as vice president of the Illinois
15 Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, and as a founding
16 board member and leader of the Illinois Business Immigration
17 Coalition; and

18 WHEREAS, Billy Lawless and his wife, Anne Lawless, became
19 United States citizens in July of 2014; and

20 WHEREAS, As a citizen, Billy Lawless continues to advocate
21 for continued U.S. residency for many hard-working people who
22 are performing essential tasks here in America; and

1 WHEREAS, The natives of Galway have substantial reason to
2 feel the ties between Ireland and the United States; the
3 western Irish city was at the epicenter of the Great Hunger of
4 1845-1849, an event that led to the decision of more than one
5 million Irish men, women, and children to seek new lives in
6 North America; many of the boats that carried these people left
7 Galway's harbor, westward-bound as part of a movement of
8 peoples that helped make Chicago and the United States what
9 they are today; therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
11 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
12 recognize Billy Lawless, a citizen of the United States of
13 America, for his decision to come to Illinois, make it his
14 home, and employ many of his fellow Illinoisans; and be it
15 further

16 RESOLVED, That we commend Billy Lawless for his work of
17 advocacy for Irish-American relations, and for his advocacy for
18 the welfare of many people who, like his Irish-American
19 predecessors and like him, have come from around the world to
20 make America an even greater country; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That copy of this resolution be presented to
22 Billy Lawless as a symbol of our respect and esteem.