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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, In 1818, Illinois became the 21st state admitted to the Union and December 3, 2018 will mark the State's 200th anniversary; and

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WHEREAS, For 200 years the Prairie State has been a national and international crossroad, from the days of Cahokia's mound builders to being a current hub of innovation, creativity, agricultural bounty, and industrial output; and

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WHEREAS, Native Americans, early settlers, and people throughout the world, came to Illinois via footpaths, river routes, railroads, highways, and air travel; and

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WHEREAS, The State of Illinois grew steadily throughout the 19th century, with Illinois citizens becoming leaders in agriculture, business, finance, technology, higher education, and science; the 19th century also saw the rise of the City of Chicago as an economic, industrial, and cultural leader; and

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WHEREAS, Business innovators, entrepreneurs, and builders found a welcoming climate and ready workers to build and create diverse enterprises, locally, nationally, and internationally; and

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1           WHEREAS, Illinois workers were pioneers in organizing to  
2 improve their lives and working conditions, with Illinois  
3 boasting more labor "local 1" union organizations than any  
4 other state; their efforts were marked in labor struggles at  
5 Haymarket Square, Pullman, Republic Steel, and mine camps and  
6 mill towns across the State; and

7           WHEREAS, The State of Illinois has cultivated many  
8 political leaders, including Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S.  
9 Grant, Adlai Stevenson II, Ronald Reagan, Hillary Rodham  
10 Clinton, and Barack Obama, who have had a great impact on  
11 national and world affairs; and

12           WHEREAS, Illinois was the first state to ratify the 13th  
13 Amendment to the United States Constitution abolishing slavery  
14 and was among the early states in ratifying the 14th and 15th  
15 constitutional amendments addressing citizenship and voting  
16 rights; and

17           WHEREAS, For two centuries, Illinois has often been the  
18 first American home to uncounted immigrants from all parts of  
19 the world, which has enriched our State's cultural diversity;  
20 and

21           WHEREAS, Illinois has always been a crossroads for the  
22 nation, historically linking north, south, east, and west, and

1 a destination for millions of people from all backgrounds who  
2 seek a fair chance and an equal opportunity in life; and

3 WHEREAS, Illinois is home to the nation's first African  
4 American President, Barack Obama, who was elected in 2008 and  
5 reelected in 2012; and

6 WHEREAS, Illinois has been home to many influential people  
7 including authors, educators, artists, entertainers, poets,  
8 athletes, social reformers, entrepreneurs, and scientists who  
9 have made significant contributions to the history and culture  
10 of our nation and have improved the quality of life of its  
11 citizens; and

12 WHEREAS, The State of Illinois continues to serve as a  
13 world leader in the 21st century in the fields of science,  
14 technology, finance, higher education, agriculture, and  
15 industry, a position made possible by the great industriousness  
16 of the people of this State; and

17 WHEREAS, The bicentennial of our statehood is an  
18 opportunity to recognize and celebrate the many cultural,  
19 political, economic, and academic contributions that Illinois  
20 and its residents have made to the nation and the world; and

21 WHEREAS, It is in the public interest to ensure that this

1 occasion is properly celebrated throughout the State; and

2 WHEREAS, The Commemorative Medallions Act (15 ILCS 555)  
3 provides that the State Treasurer may issue medallions to  
4 commemorate popular contemporaneous events of statewide  
5 interest; therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH GENERAL  
7 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
8 CONCURRING HEREIN, that the State Treasurer is authorized to  
9 issue official commemorative medallions honoring the State's  
10 bicentennial; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the State Treasurer shall contract for the  
12 production, marketing, distribution, and the sale of the  
13 medallions; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
15 delivered to State Treasurer Michael Frerichs and the Illinois  
16 Bicentennial Commission.