



HR0046

LRB101 07260 ALS 52299 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to commend Sister Vivian Whitehead for the
4 success of the Center for Correctional Concerns and her work to
5 help incarcerated men and women build a pathway to productive
6 and fulfilling lives; and

7 WHEREAS, Sister Whitehead was born and raised in Chicago;
8 she attended St. Dorothy Grade School and Lorette Academy in
9 Woodlawn; she received her bachelor's degree from the College
10 of St. Francis and later earned a Doctor of Philosophy in
11 Biology from St. Bonaventure University in New York; she became
12 a Franciscan sister in 1947; and

13 WHEREAS, Sister Whitehead began her career in education as
14 a high school teacher at St. Mary's in Columbus, Ohio; she
15 later taught at St. Francis Academy in Joliet; in 1968, she
16 served as an administrator for her congregation; from 1976
17 until 1979, she worked as a counselor at the University of
18 Notre Dame, where she ministered to the spiritual needs of the
19 students; during her time at Notre Dame, she developed an
20 interest in criminal justice; she later attended the Benedict
21 Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where she gained practical
22 experience in jail ministry; as a result, she realized that in
23 addition to substance abuse treatment and mental health

1 counseling, many jail residents needed a second chance for an
2 education; and

3 WHEREAS, Sister Whitehead returned to Joliet, began her
4 work with the Will County Jail, and founded the Center for
5 Correctional Concerns in July 1979; a not-for-profit agency,
6 the Center is funded largely by grants and donations; she
7 headed the Center from 1970 until 1988, when she left to work
8 in Appalachia as an adult education and family literacy
9 teacher; she returned to the Center in 1999 and continues to
10 minister to the men and women in the Will County Adult
11 Correctional Facility; and

12 WHEREAS, Under Sister Whitehead's leadership, the Center
13 has greatly expanded; it is fully staffed with administrators,
14 counselors, teachers, and volunteers; in its 40-year history,
15 more than 2,500 students have earned their high school
16 equivalency diplomas; the pass rate of the Center's students is
17 30 percent higher than those in similar area agencies; the
18 Center offers literacy training for non-readers and enrichment
19 classes; when necessary, the Center also offers a Spanish Tutor
20 and a Spanish version of the test; although education is the
21 Center's first priority, spiritual counseling and guidance,
22 along with substance abuse counseling and treatment, are also
23 provided; the Center also works with lawyers, public defenders,
24 and social service agencies on behalf of the incarcerated;

1 therefore, 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 commend Sister Vivian Whitehead for the success and
5 long-term impact of the Center for Correctional Concerns and
6 its work helping incarcerated men and women find hope and
7 purpose; and be it further

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