



HR0403

LRB101 12543 MST 60897 r

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to congratulate the Kewanee Park District
4 on the occasion of its 100th anniversary; and

5 WHEREAS, The Kewanee Park District was founded in 1919 by
6 Kewanee resident and industrial magnate Emerit E. Baker; and

7 WHEREAS, Emerit E. Baker was born on April 10, 1855 on a
8 rural farm near Aurora; and

9 WHEREAS, At the age of only 15, Emerit E. Baker left home
10 and went to work in Chicago for the Anderson Steamer and Heater
11 Company as an office boy; and

12 WHEREAS, Emerit E. Baker eventually moved to the
13 headquarters of the Anderson Steamer and Heater Company in
14 Kewanee and worked his way up, eventually becoming a member of
15 the board; and

16 WHEREAS, When the Anderson Steamer and Heater Company sold
17 its boiler business to focus on tubing, Emerit E. Baker saw an
18 opportunity and purchased the boiler company; and

19 WHEREAS, Emerit E. Baker became the president of the newly

1 created Kewanee Boiler Company, which sold boilers all over the
2 world and even installed a Kewanee boiler in the Statue of
3 Liberty; and

4 WHEREAS, Emerit E. Baker was a noted leader and
5 philanthropist in the community of Kewanee; he helped organize
6 the local Rotary Club in 1917 and served as the village
7 president and even as a volunteer fire fighter; and

8 WHEREAS, In 1919, Emerit E. Baker announced at a Chamber of
9 Commerce meeting that he would donate \$50,000 toward a park
10 system if the people of Kewanee would pass a referendum to
11 establish a park system and match his donation by authorizing a
12 matching \$50,000 in bonds; and

13 WHEREAS, The bond was approved by the people, and Emerit E.
14 Baker was elected the first president of the Kewanee Park
15 Board; and

16 WHEREAS, Five parks would ultimately become a part of the
17 Kewanee Park District, including Northeast Park, Chautauqua
18 Park, Windmont Park, Liberty Park, and Baker Park, named after
19 Emerit E. Baker; and

20 WHEREAS, In 1924, Emerit E. Baker established a foundation,
21 E.E. Baker Incorporated, and funded it with \$400,000 dollars in

1 stocks and bonds in order to fund the Elks Crippled Children's
2 Clinic, the Kewanee Public Library, and the Kewanee Park
3 District; and

4 WHEREAS, The Kewanee Park District's trust is worth nearly
5 \$1.3 million today, a legacy of the generosity of Emerit E.
6 Baker; and

7 WHEREAS, To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Kewanee
8 Park District, the park district will host celebrations during
9 the course of the summer that include music and games;
10 therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
12 HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
13 we congratulate the Kewanee Park District on the occasion of
14 its 100th anniversary and celebrate the legacy of Emerit E.
15 Baker; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
17 presented to the Kewanee Park Board of Commissioners as a
18 symbol of our respect and esteem.