



HR0442

LRB101 12690 ALS 61340 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to commend Equality Illinois and its
4 mission to build a better Illinois by advancing equal treatment
5 and full acceptance of the LGBTQ community; and

6 WHEREAS, Equality Illinois was founded as the Illinois
7 Federation for Human Rights by Arthur Johnston, Rick Garcia,
8 and the late Jon Henri Damski and Lana Hostetler in 1991; its
9 mission was to secure, protect, and defend the basic civil
10 rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, and questioning
11 transgender (LGBTQ) Illinoisans; the organization's name was
12 changed to Equality Illinois in 2000; and

13 WHEREAS, Equality Illinois envisions a fair and unified
14 State where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and
15 where all people live freely regardless of sexual orientation
16 or gender identity or gender expression; and

17 WHEREAS, Equality Illinois achieved a benchmark victory
18 with the passage of an amendment adding sexual orientation and
19 gender identity to the Illinois Human Rights Act in 2005; that
20 same year, the organization was inducted into the Chicago Gay
21 and Lesbian Hall of Fame; and

1 WHEREAS, Equality Illinois was instrumental in securing
2 passage of the civil union law in Illinois in 2010; members of
3 the organization traveled across the State to collect over
4 30,000 postcards from supporters urging their legislators to
5 support the marriage bill in all 118 legislative districts; the
6 organization made history by passing the Religious Freedom and
7 Marriage Fairness Act out of the General Assembly and onto then
8 Governor Pat Quinn's desk, making Illinois the 16th state to
9 secure freedom to marry; and

10 WHEREAS, Equality Illinois engaged hundreds of new voters
11 and ensured accurate voter registration during election
12 cycles; the organization created the innovative Vote Naked
13 campaign and distributed over 550,000 mail-in ballot requests
14 and helped voters take advantage of a new law that allows
15 voting by mail for any reason; following Vote Naked, Equality
16 Illinois created the Get Your V Card campaign to encourage
17 voter registration and participation; and

18 WHEREAS, Equality Illinois built a successful campaign to
19 protect LGBTQ youth by supporting the Youth Mental Health
20 Protection Act; the organization led a winning effort to update
21 the Illinois Hate Crimes Act, including the first explicit
22 inclusion of crimes against transgender people and protections
23 for LGBTQ community centers, and worked with Illinois'
24 Congressional delegation to fortify support for federal

1 pro-LGBTQ equality measures, including the Equality Act, the
2 first comprehensive LGBTQ civil rights bill introduced in
3 Congress; and

4 WHEREAS, Equality Illinois worked with local communities
5 throughout the State to pass local nondiscrimination
6 ordinances and unveiled a comprehensive Know Your Rights
7 educational program to educate the LGBTQ community about its
8 rights and responsibilities under State and federal laws;
9 therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
11 HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
12 we commend Equality Illinois, the State's oldest, largest, and
13 most effective LGBTQ equality organization, on its work to
14 reach individuals and organizations, both within the LGBTQ
15 community and throughout the general public, across the
16 private, public, and nonprofit sectors and to build a better
17 Illinois; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
19 presented to Equality Illinois as an expression of our esteem
20 and respect.