



HR0247

LRB102 17617 ECR 23321 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of  
3 Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of former  
4 State Representative Ann Simonsen Hughes, a resident of  
5 Woodstock since 1967, who passed away on March 3, 2021; and

6           WHEREAS, Ann Hughes's life made her a symbol of what  
7 McHenry County was and what it would become; in her first years  
8 in our state, she worked with the people of Illinois who grow  
9 things by serving as secretary and treasurer of the Hughes  
10 family's hybrid seed company; and

11           WHEREAS, As a taxpayer, Ann Hughes become interested in  
12 the work and challenges of the taxing bodies of Woodstock; she  
13 ran for and won election to the Woodstock District 200 School  
14 Board and the McHenry County Board; and

15           WHEREAS, Ann Hughes was a woman educated in science; she  
16 graduated from Wells College with a degree in biology in 1965;  
17 as time passed, she became more and more aware of what a highly  
18 educated and increasingly attractive place to live that  
19 McHenry County was becoming; and

20           WHEREAS, As McHenry County grew as a friendly place for  
21 professionals to live, Ann Hughes, with executive business

1 experience, won election to be chairperson on the McHenry  
2 County Board; and

3 WHEREAS, McHenry County grew fast in the 1970s and 1980s;  
4 the county almost doubled in population and earned an  
5 additional seat in the Illinois House of Representatives in  
6 the redistricting after the 1990 census; and

7 WHEREAS, Continuing her life as a community leader, Ann  
8 Hughes was nominated on March 17, 1992 to represent the  
9 newly-redrawn Sixty-Third Representative District in the  
10 Illinois House as a member of the Republican Party; on  
11 November 3, 1992, she was elected to serve her first term by a  
12 landslide margin of almost 12,000 votes; and

13 WHEREAS, Ann Hughes established herself as an authority on  
14 McHenry County interests and issues; in her first year in the  
15 Illinois House, aware of the importance of safe boating to  
16 Eastern McHenry County, she was the chief House sponsor of SB  
17 734; signed into law as Public Act 88-175, the law added  
18 cannabis and other drugs to the Boating Under the Influence  
19 Law; and

20 WHEREAS, Aware of the vanishing green and open spaces of  
21 McHenry County, Ann Hughes, in her second year of office, was  
22 the chief House sponsor of SB 1191; signed into law as Public

1 Act 88-657, the law granted substantial property tax benefits  
2 to properties dedicated as natural areas and open space; this  
3 law helped generate what has become a network of conservation  
4 easements throughout Illinois, especially, but not limited to,  
5 the suburbs of Chicago; and

6 WHEREAS, After the election of November 8, 1994, Ann  
7 Hughes joined her fellow House Republicans as the majority  
8 party in the Illinois House of Representatives within the  
9 Eighty-Ninth General Assembly; she quickly established her  
10 determination to use her majority status to seek agreement and  
11 consensus, including in some cases bipartisan consensus, on a  
12 wide variety of issues; and

13 WHEREAS, Aware of the issue within McHenry County  
14 involving townships and the government of the county,  
15 Representative Ann Hughes sought a consensus outcome and  
16 successfully sponsored HB 438 (Public Act 89-365) to allow  
17 dissolution of all of the townships in a county if a concurrent  
18 supermajority of a majority of the population in the county,  
19 comprising of majorities of the votes in at least  
20 three-fourths of the townships, seek the dissolution of the  
21 township form of government in that county; and

22 WHEREAS, On the east side of the Fox River in Fox River  
23 Grove, Algonquin Road approaches, and crosses, the main line

1 of the former Chicago and North Western Railroad; on the  
2 morning of October 25, 1995, a southbound passenger train  
3 running on what is now the Metra Northwest line collided at  
4 this crossing with a school bus; seven high school students  
5 were killed in the tragic accident, and a memorial stands at  
6 the site to this day; and

7 WHEREAS, Representative Ann Hughes and the rest of the  
8 Illinois General Assembly responded to the disaster; she  
9 chaired and co-chaired a series of hearings to gather  
10 information on the technical facts of the complex intersection  
11 where the accident occurred and on interactions between  
12 vehicles and rail crossings in general; and

13 WHEREAS, Public Act 89-658, initiated by Representative  
14 Ann Hughes as HB 3436, was among her chief achievements as a  
15 legislator; this measure enacted a series of rail crossing  
16 safety enforcement measures that remain in place as of 2021,  
17 including the requirement that buses and their drivers always  
18 stop, look, and listen before crossing a railroad line; and

19 WHEREAS, The now-familiar signs on railroad crossings,  
20 warning vehicles and pedestrians of a fine if they trespass on  
21 a crossing when the crossing signal flashes a warning, can be  
22 traced back to Representative Ann Hughes's Public Act 89-658,  
23 which was signed into law on August 14, 1996; and

1           WHEREAS, After winning election to a third term on  
2 November 5, 1996, with her now-customary landslide majority of  
3 more than 17,000 votes, Ann Hughes retired from office in June  
4 1997 to resume life with her family; and

5           WHEREAS, Ann Hughes and her husband, Earl Hughes, Jr., had  
6 three sons, David, Donald, and James Hughes; as an active  
7 family and community leader, by the time of her death, she had  
8 eight grandchildren, Andrew, Megan, Samuel, Grant, Jack,  
9 Madelyn, Molly, and Jeffrey; she was also close to her nephew,  
10 Richard Freytag; therefore, be it

11           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
12 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
13 we mourn the loss of former State Representative Ann Simonsen  
14 Hughes of the 88th, 89th, and 90th General Assemblies; and be  
15 it further

16           RESOLVED, That we observe the legacy of Ann Hughes's  
17 commitment to transportation safety, environmental protection,  
18 and frugal local governments; and be it further

19           RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
20 presented to the family of Ann Hughes as an expression of our  
21 deepest sympathy.