



HR0338

LRB102 18597 ECR 26920 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Lawrence County was formed on January 16, 1821 out of land from Crawford and Edwards Counties; it was named for Captain James Lawrence who was killed in action during the War of 1812 while commanding the frigate ship USS Chesapeake and who is especially remembered for giving his men the famous last order "Don't Give Up the Ship"; and

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WHEREAS, The history of Lawrence County includes the George Rogers Clark march during the American Revolution across the land that would eventually become the county; Native American Shawnee Chief Tecumseh traveled through its forests, and future U.S. President Abraham Lincoln and his family migrated to Illinois crossing over the Wabash River into Lawrence County; and

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WHEREAS, On February 18, 1779, George Rogers Clark and his ragged band of soldiers passed through Lawrence County, crossing the Wabash River at St. Francisville, and conquered the Vincennes fort on February 25; and

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WHEREAS, Settlers of French, Scottish, and Irish descent are said to have built quietly and with determination for the future in the county; historical records indicate that shortly after 1800, John Morris, a free Black man, traveled to

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1 Lawrence County with the Samuel Allison family and became one
2 of the inhabitants of Fort Allison, located at the present
3 site of Russellville; other free Black people and their
4 families followed, including the families of Morris, Anderson,
5 Tann, Goins, Cole, Portee, Casey, Byrd, Day, Pettiford,
6 Russell, Blackwell, and Jones; and

7 WHEREAS, In March of 1830, the Lincoln Family crossed the
8 Wabash River into Illinois by ox-teamed wagons; the family
9 included 21-year-old Abraham, his father Thomas, his
10 step-mother Sarah Bush Lincoln, and her two daughters and
11 sons-in-law; later, Abraham Lincoln would visit Lawrence
12 County and the courthouse as a practicing attorney; and

13 WHEREAS, Lawrence County is noted for being the first
14 Illinois county to hang a woman; Mrs. Elizabeth Reed of
15 Crawford County was hanged on May 23, 1845 for murdering her
16 husband, Leonard Reed, by arsenic poison; and

17 WHEREAS, The first volunteer recruits requested by
18 President Abraham Lincoln for Civil War service came from
19 Lawrence County; men from Lawrence County served in various
20 Illinois Infantry regiments, including the 8th Regiment,
21 Illinois Infantry, Company I, 36th Regiment, Company C, 61st
22 Regiment, Companies H and K, 62nd Regiment, Company A, 66th
23 Regiment, Company I, 70th Regiment, Company K, 91st Regiment,

1 Company F, 130th Regiment, Company I, and 154th Regiment,
2 Company E; and

3 WHEREAS, Crude oil was discovered in Lawrence County in
4 the early 1900s and created an economic boom for the area,
5 including the establishment of the Indian Refining Company,
6 later acquired by the Texas Company (TEXACO); the chemists at
7 the Lawrenceville refinery of the Indian Refining Company
8 patented the first "wax free" oil under the Havoline brand,
9 which is currently the standard for all conventional motor
10 oils throughout the world; and

11 WHEREAS, During World War II, the United States Army Air
12 Corps base, George Field, was built in Lawrence County,
13 located five miles east, northeast of Lawrenceville; it
14 operated as part of an advanced pilot training school of
15 70,000 for the U.S. Army Air Forces from 1942 until 1945;
16 initially named Lawrence Army Flying School, the name was
17 changed to honor General Harold H. George who was killed in a
18 ground accident at Batchelor Field, southeast of Darwin,
19 Australia, on April 29, 1942; and

20 WHEREAS, According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Lawrence
21 County has a total area of 374 square miles, 372 square miles
22 of land and 2 square miles of water; according to the 2010
23 census, it had a population of 16,833; and

1 WHEREAS, Lawrence County includes the cities of
2 Bridgeport, Lawrenceville (the county seat), St. Francisville,
3 and Sumner, the village of Russellville, and the
4 unincorporated communities of Billett, Birds, Chauncey,
5 Helena, Petrolia, Pinkstaff, Sand Barrens, and Westport; the
6 county also includes the nine townships of Allison, Bond,
7 Bridgeport, Christy, Denison, Lawrence, Lukin, Petty, and
8 Russell; and

9 WHEREAS, Lawrence County currently boasts two entries on
10 the U.S. National Register of Historic Places; the first is
11 The Lawrenceville County Courthouse at 1100 State Street,
12 which was built in 1888-89 and was added to the Register on
13 December 7, 2010; the second is the Wabash Cannonball Bridge
14 at Thirteenth Street, also known as the Wooden Bridge, which
15 was built in 1909 and added to the Register on April 26, 2016;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, The current major employers in Lawrence County
18 include Toyota Boshoku, Kauffman Engineering, United
19 Healthcare, Rucker's Candy, and Wagner-Smith Equipment
20 Company; and

21 WHEREAS, Lawrence County is served by two school
22 districts, the Lawrenceville High School District and the Red

1 Hill High School District; and

2 WHEREAS, The local Lawrenceville High School basketball
3 team, known as the Indians, has provided a rich successful
4 basketball history as the Class A state basketball champions
5 in 1972, 1974, 1982, and 1983 with a combined two season
6 win-loss record of 68-0 from 1982-83; therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
8 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
9 we congratulate the people of Lawrence County on the occasion
10 of their 200th anniversary; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
12 presented to the Chairman of the Lawrence County Board and the
13 Lawrence County Historical Society as a symbol of our esteem
14 and respect.