



HR0525

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives wish to congratulate Jim Ardis on the occasion of his retirement as mayor of the City of Peoria; and

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WHEREAS, Mayor Ardis has served as mayor from 2005 to 2021; prior to his election as mayor, he was appointed to the Peoria city liquor commission in 1997; he served on the Peoria City Council as an at-large member from 1999 through 2005; he is currently the second-longest serving mayor in city history; and

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WHEREAS, Public service has been a legacy for Mayor Ardis's family; his father, Jim Ardis Jr., served as a Peoria city councilman from 1969 to 1973 and his grandfather, John Bulger, served as Peoria County Clerk; and

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WHEREAS, Mayor Ardis's time as mayor has seen improvements in infrastructure, public safety, economic development, neighborhood stability, relationships with other units of local government, and public and private education in Peoria; and

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WHEREAS, Mayor Ardis has been instrumental in many projects throughout Peoria; he established the Peoria Promise,

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1 which is a groundbreaking school scholarship program that
2 supports economic development by giving young people a chance
3 to stay in Peoria for a higher education, therefore delivering
4 a more skilled workforce in Peoria; and

5 WHEREAS, Mayor Ardis launched the Don't Shoot violence
6 prevention initiative, which sought to decrease shootings and
7 gang-related violence; this program required an immense amount
8 of communication, planning, and execution; this prevention
9 initiative has saved lives and community resources and
10 produces a better and more safe community; and

11 WHEREAS, Mayor Ardis implemented a litter-pick program,
12 reinforcing the city's efforts to encourage a litter-free
13 community; he called for a coordinated liter removal and
14 environmental management throughout Peoria and created the
15 litter committee aimed at getting citizens involved in
16 beautifying Peoria; and

17 WHEREAS, Mayor Ardis expanded tourism opportunities in
18 Peoria in many transformative ways; he oversaw the restoration
19 of the Hotel Pere Marquette to a world class Marriott hotel and
20 accompanying Courtyard Marriott attached via skyway to the
21 expanded Peoria Civic Center; he also led the transfer of
22 city-owned land in downtown Peoria to develop the Peoria
23 Riverfront Museum and Caterpillar Visitor's Center; these

1 tourism promotion activities helped bring revenue to Peoria
2 through attraction of visitors and conventions to the hotel
3 and the Peoria Civic Center; and

4 WHEREAS, Recreation opportunities were initiated in the
5 Peoria community under Mayor Ardis's leadership as well,
6 including projects such as the Louisville Slugger Sports
7 Complex and the expansion and connection of the Kellar Branch
8 of the Rock Island Trail, a project awaiting action for more
9 than three decades for the region; and

10 WHEREAS, A consummate advocate in Springfield on behalf of
11 issues related to cities and villages, Mayor Ardis served as
12 an Illinois Municipal League Board Member and Executive Board
13 Member; he was a strong leader for municipal policy issues in
14 Springfield on the need for pension relief for cities and an
15 early advocate for concealed carry in the State of Illinois;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, The Peoria Warehouse District was developed
18 through the leadership of Mayor Ardis, including the creation
19 of the Warehouse District TIF, securing 25 million in state
20 and federal infrastructure and funding the completion of
21 numerous redevelopment agreements that delivered new
22 restaurants, shops, and residential facilities to the
23 community; and

1 WHEREAS, Mayor Ardis has shown great dedication to the
2 City of Peoria and to the citizens of Central Illinois by his
3 skillful navigation through the great recession and the
4 COVID-19 pandemic; and

5 WHEREAS, Mayor Ardis's goal has always been the betterment
6 of the City of Peoria by demonstrating core values of
7 responsibility, professionalism, accountability, and
8 transparency; he has worked tirelessly to build a stronger,
9 safer, and more prosperous community; he has excelled at
10 making tough decisions and building opportunities for Peoria
11 to attract jobs, retain talent, and provide a welcoming
12 environment to families throughout the community; therefore,
13 be it

14 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
15 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
16 we congratulate Jim Ardis on his retirement as the mayor of the
17 City of Peoria, and we wish him the best in all his future
18 endeavors; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
20 presented to Mayor Ardis as a symbol of our respect and esteem.