



HR0868

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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 Illinois State Representative and U.S. Congressman Timothy
5 Vincent "Tim" Johnson, who passed away on May 9, 2022 at his
6 home in Urbana, among family and friends; and

7 WHEREAS, Lifelong Champaign County native and resident
8 Congressman Johnson was born on July 23, 1946 in Champaign; he
9 pursued his education in the twin cities of his birth,
10 graduating from Urbana High School in 1964 and then attending
11 the University of Illinois; he earned a bachelor's degree in
12 1969 (Phi Beta Kappa) and a juris doctorate in 1972 (Order of
13 the Coif); and

14 WHEREAS, Even more significant to Congressman Johnson than
15 these academic honors was his family heritage; on his mother's
16 side, his grandfather was McLean County Republican stalwart
17 Arthur Evans; his own father, Robert Johnson, followed the
18 path of public service for many years in Champaign County,
19 rising to membership of the Urbana City Council and serving as
20 the Chairman of the Champaign County Republican Party; and

21 WHEREAS, Even in the 1960's, Champaign County was not
22 quite as Republican as other downstate Illinois counties;

1 Congressman Johnson's father, despite his partisan role,
2 developed a reputation as a can-do problem solver who would
3 work with neighbors of both parties to get things done for
4 Champaign-Urbana; and

5 WHEREAS, During his time in law school and after
6 graduation, Congressman Johnson served as a teaching assistant
7 in the U of I's College of Commerce and College of Law; and

8 WHEREAS, While in law school, Congressman Johnson turned
9 his attention to politics, seeking and winning his father's
10 seat on the Urbana City Council, on which his service began in
11 1971; and

12 WHEREAS, Upon the retirement of Rep. John C. Hirschfeld in
13 1976, Congressman Johnson sought the nomination for what was
14 then an open Republican seat in the 52nd District, which
15 encompassed part of Champaign County as well as Douglas and
16 Moultrie Counties; in a six-candidate race, he won the
17 nomination, having not yet celebrated his 30th birthday; and

18 WHEREAS, Elected to the Illinois House of Representatives
19 in the fall of America's bicentennial year, Congressman
20 Johnson began a 24 year career in Illinois's largest
21 legislative chamber; working with the House Judiciary II -
22 Criminal Law Committee, he made many suggestions to improve

1 the criminal laws of Illinois; and

2 WHEREAS, As a powerful voice for downstate Illinois,
3 Congressman Johnson was named Deputy Minority Leader by House
4 Republican Leader Lee A. Daniels, serving in this role
5 continuously except in 1995-96 when Republicans organized the
6 Illinois House and his role was that of Illinois House Deputy
7 Majority Leader; and

8 WHEREAS, In 2000, upon the retirement of Congressman Tom
9 Ewing, Congressman Johnson took the opportunity to seek
10 nomination and election from his east central Illinois home to
11 the United States House of Representatives; and

12 WHEREAS, As a member of Congress, Congressman Johnson
13 served on the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure
14 Committee and the U.S. House Agriculture Committee; in this
15 latter committee, he served as the chairman of the
16 Subcommittee on Rural Development, Research, Biotechnology,
17 and Foreign Agriculture; and

18 WHEREAS, As a member of Congress and of the Agriculture
19 and Transportation Committees, Congressman Johnson placed
20 corn-based ethanol and America-grown biodiesel fuels at the
21 center of American life; facing down some of America's largest
22 business firms, he worked with other corn belt lawmakers to

1 successfully demand that ethanol-blended motor fuels become
2 the octane enhancer of choice at American motor fuel retail
3 pumps nationwide; and

4 WHEREAS, Congressman Johnson was a member of many
5 congressional caucuses; as the partisan gap between the two
6 parties widened in Washington and elsewhere, and remembering
7 his father's heritage of working across the aisle, he was the
8 co-founder and Co-chairman of the Center Aisle Caucus; and

9 WHEREAS, Congressman Johnson took care to stay in touch
10 with his constituents back home in Illinois; many homes in
11 central Illinois remember their phone ringing on some evening
12 and hearing the voice of their old friend checking in with
13 them, asking how they were doing, and seeking nonpartisan
14 advice on the great issues of the day; and

15 WHEREAS, After 12 years in the U.S. House, Congressman
16 Johnson decided, in 2012, that his work was done; he returned
17 home to central Illinois and resumed a schedule of public
18 teaching, including appointments at Illinois State University
19 (2013-2014), Danville Area Community College (2014), and the
20 College of Liberal Arts at his alma mater, the University of
21 Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (2014); and

22 WHEREAS, In 2013, Congressman Johnson was awarded the

1 Order of Lincoln by the Lincoln Academy of Illinois, the
2 highest-ranking honor that an Illinoisan can receive for
3 service to the people; therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
5 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
6 we mourn the passing of former Illinois State Representative
7 and U.S. Congressman Timothy Vincent "Tim" Johnson and extend
8 our sincere condolences to his family, friends, and all who
9 knew and loved him; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That we recognize the lengthy public service of
11 Congressman Johnson; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That the heritage of American elected officials
13 reaching out to their constituents of both parties, talking to
14 them, asking for advice, and acting as their public servants
15 rather than as their masters is a memory that is flickering but
16 can never fade away; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
18 presented to Congressman Johnson's daughter, Heather
19 Stephenson.