



HR0969

LRB102 28881 ECR 40771 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives wish to congratulate Pastor Christopher T. "Chris" Harris Sr. on the anniversary of his serving as senior pastor at Bright Star Church of God in Christ (COGIC) in Chicago for the past 23 years; and

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WHEREAS, Pastor Harris was born to Ezekiel Simpson and Patricia Ann Harris in Chicago on April 1, 1974, and he has been a member of Bright Star COGIC since birth; he graduated from Tabernacle Christian Academy in 1992; he then attended Olive-Harvey College and the Moody Bible Institute; and

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WHEREAS, Pastor Harris was appointed first assistant of Bright Star COGIC on October 19, 1997; he was appointed senior pastor on November 18, 1999; he has also served as minister of music at a number of churches across various denominations for over 16 years, including Bright Star COGIC, St. Elizabeth Catholic Church, and New Hope Missionary Baptist Church; and

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WHEREAS, Under Pastor Harris' leadership, Bright Star COGIC has increased to more than 1,250 parishioners; recently, he oversaw the partnership of the church and Howard Johnson to vaccinate over 800 people and support thousands of families in housing, utilities, and food throughout the COVID-19 pandemic;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, Pastor Harris founded the 501(c)(3) nonprofit
3 Bright Star Community Outreach (BSCO) in 2009 to provide
4 anti-violence programs to youth and families; his organization
5 has operated with a budget of over five million dollars,
6 provided employment to more than 450 people, collaborated with
7 over 105 organizations in the greater Bronzeville community,
8 and expanded in July 2017 with the creation of its Trauma
9 Helpline; he has also created and led the Greater Bronzeville
10 Community Action Plan through BSCO, where more than 50
11 Bronzeville organizations are collaboratively partnering to
12 make an impact on violence and trauma; and

13 WHEREAS, Pastor Harris developed The Urban Resilience
14 Network (TURN) Center in 2013 to address the violence and
15 trauma that was evident in Bronzeville; his center endeavors
16 to focus on five core competencies, including counseling,
17 parenting, mentorship, work-force development, and advocacy;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, During his career, Pastor Harris has ministered
20 in over 24 countries; he has led six trips to Israel, including
21 leading more than 70 faith leaders to the Holy Lands; he has
22 traveled the country, building bridges between African
23 American and Jewish clergy and communities; he has also taught

1 students on various college campuses of the importance of
2 Black and Jewish relations; and

3 WHEREAS, Pastor Harris was appointed district
4 superintendent of the Bread of Heaven District in 2002,
5 becoming one of the youngest pastors to hold this prestigious
6 position in the COGIC organization in Illinois; he also served
7 on the Board of Bishops for the Abundant Harvest Fellowship of
8 Churches for six years; and

9 WHEREAS, Pastor Harris serves as the chairman of the
10 Bronzeville Community Action Council and as a member of the
11 University of Chicago Medicine (UCM) Community Advisory
12 Council; he has previously served as a member of the American
13 Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) National Council and
14 as president of the 4th Ward and Cook County Clergy
15 Coalitions; and

16 WHEREAS, Pastor Harris has received numerous awards for
17 his leadership and community service, including the Decalogue
18 Society of Lawyers Community Service 2013 Award, the Alpha
19 Epsilon Pi Fraternity Congressman Eliot Engel 2015-2016 Award,
20 the 2nd Annual Israel-Midwest Bridge 2016 Award, the African
21 American History Month 2017 Award, the State of Illinois
22 Treasurer Outstanding Commitment Community Service 2018 Award,
23 the NAMI Chicago Light the Darkness Faith Based Leader of the

1 Year 2018 Award, and many more; he was also chosen to be part
2 of the Foundation Executive Fellows Program in 2019 and was
3 selected to be a Leadership Greater Chicago 2021 Fellow; and

4 WHEREAS, Pastor Harris married Johanna "JoJo" Harris on
5 September 18, 2010; he is the father of Chrystal, Chris Jr.,
6 Christian, and Christiana and the godfather of Keshon;
7 therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
9 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
10 we congratulate Pastor Christopher T. "Chris" Harris on the
11 anniversary of his serving as senior pastor at Bright Star
12 Church of God in Christ (COGIC) for the past 23 years; and be
13 it further

14 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
15 presented to Pastor Harris as a symbol of our esteem and
16 respect.