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LRB102 10460 LAW 15789 r

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The Illinois State Armory was built in 1936 and designed by State of Illinois architect C. Herrick Hammond; it was designated an official City of Springfield landmark by the Springfield Historic Sites Commission; it was equipped with an auditorium, a gymnasium, and a ground floor that could provide temporary seating for several thousand people; it has been the site of Governors' inaugural addresses, state social and athletic programs, theater performances, artistic exhibits, and music productions, as well as serving as the offices of the State's military and police agencies; and

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WHEREAS, The State of Illinois has included the Illinois State Armory in the Capital Development Bill, with more than \$100 million set aside for renovations to ensure this historic downtown Springfield building can become usable again; and

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WHEREAS, The people who have visited the Illinois State Armory, including the Cold War mayor of Berlin Willy Brandt, boxing great Muhammad Ali, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., are part of the history of the building; both John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon spoke at the Armory as presidential candidates; former President Harry Truman was a guest speaker at an Armory banquet in the 1960s; and

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1 WHEREAS, Specifically, civil rights leader Dr. Martin
2 Luther King Jr. addressed the Illinois State AFL-CIO at their
3 8th Annual Convention at the Illinois State Armory on October
4 7, 1965; he connected labor rights with civil rights, stating,
5 "It is not a coincidence that the Labor Movement and the Civil
6 Rights Movement have the same essential origins. Each is a
7 movement that grew out of burning needs of an oppressed poor
8 for security and equality. Each was denied justice by the
9 dominant forces of society and had to win a place in the sun by
10 its own intense struggle and indescribable self-sacrifice";
11 and

12 WHEREAS, That speech was recorded and preserved by the
13 Illinois AFL-CIO, which included Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s
14 words, "However difficult our problems may be now, however
15 dark the day and dismal the night, I still have faith in
16 America and in the democratic process. I still believe that
17 working together and through a mighty coalition of conscience
18 we will be able to solve the problems ahead"; and

19 WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s words at the
20 Illinois State Armory were as heartfelt and inspiring in 1965
21 as they are today; therefore, be it

22 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL
23 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF

1 REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING HEREIN, that we urge the Illinois
2 State Armory committee to capture the essence of the
3 building's impressive history by placing a bronze plaque at
4 the renovated facility to commemorate the treasured visit of
5 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That the plaque be accompanied with quotes
7 including the very words Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke at
8 the Illinois State Armory on October 7, 1965, words that
9 embrace organizational progress, justice, democracy, and a
10 faith in God; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That honoring this great man will capture a
12 moment in history that connected Illinois workers with the
13 national civil rights movement; Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
14 stated on that day, "If our two movements unite their social
15 pioneering initiative, thirty years from now people will look
16 back on this day and honor those who had the vision to see the
17 full possibilities of modern society and the courage to fight
18 for their realization.".