



HR0023

LRB103 27127 LAW 53496 r

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Bulgaria and the United States are strategic  
3 partners and allies, sharing ties of culture, tradition, and  
4 common interest; and

5 WHEREAS, The year 2023 marks the 20th anniversary of the  
6 United States Senate's ratification of the Protocol for  
7 Accession of Bulgaria into the North Atlantic Treaty  
8 Organization (NATO), the 80th anniversary of the Bulgarian  
9 people's rescue of the Bulgarian Jews, the 120th anniversary  
10 of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the  
11 United States and Bulgaria, and the 145th anniversary of the  
12 liberation of Bulgaria; and

13 WHEREAS, The first Bulgarian emigrants to Illinois arrived  
14 in the second half of the 19th century; and

15 WHEREAS, Granite City hosts the oldest Bulgarian American  
16 community in the United States; and

17 WHEREAS, The prominent Bulgarian American banker, Henry  
18 Krantzhev, served as the president of the Granite City Trust  
19 and Savings Bank and as the president of the Masonic Temple  
20 Association, receiving the title of Scoutmaster; and

1           WHEREAS, The first Bulgarian emigrants to Chicago, who  
2 began to arrive as early as the 1870s, were students sent by  
3 American protestant missionaries for study in the United  
4 States; and

5           WHEREAS, While most of these students returned to  
6 Bulgaria, some remained and created a Bulgarian American  
7 community in Illinois; and

8           WHEREAS, Bulgaria was admitted into and permitted to  
9 display an exhibit at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in  
10 Chicago, an event hailed by the Chicago Tribune as the first  
11 diplomatic recognition accorded to Bulgaria as an independent  
12 state; and

13           WHEREAS, Aleko Konstantinov, a famous Bulgarian writer,  
14 recounted his journey to the World's Columbian Exposition in  
15 Chicago in his book, To Chicago and Back, which became  
16 instrumental in encouraging generations of Bulgarians to  
17 emigrate to Chicago; and

18           WHEREAS, Tens of thousands of Bulgarians arrived in the  
19 United States from the geographic region of Macedonia at the  
20 beginning of the 20th century, pursuing freedom and fleeing  
21 the devastation and horrors occasioned by regional unrest; and

1           WHEREAS, The first Bulgarian Mission with its own priest  
2 was established in Madison in 1907; and

3           WHEREAS, Madison is home to Illinois' oldest Bulgarian  
4 Orthodox Church, Holy Trinity, built by Macedonian Bulgarians  
5 with the current church building existing since 1910; and

6           WHEREAS, The Granite City Bulgarian community published  
7 the first Bulgarian newspaper in the United States, the Vox  
8 Populi, or Voice of the People, from 1907 to 1950; other  
9 Bulgarians newspapers, such as the New World (1908-1909),  
10 Emigrant (1909), Freedom (1914-1917), Macedonian Tribune  
11 (1927-present), and others, followed in its wake; and

12           WHEREAS, Stoyan Yurukov became the first Bulgarian pilot  
13 to fly in the skies above Chicago in 1912, charting the course  
14 for many other Bulgarian pilots who have lived and worked in  
15 the Windy City; and

16           WHEREAS, Bulgarian emigrants from the region of Macedonia  
17 founded the Macedonian Patriotic Organization in 1922; the  
18 organization continues to work for human, civil, and economic  
19 rights of all individuals, regardless of ethnicity, who hail  
20 from the geographic region; and

21           WHEREAS, Assen Hristov Jordanoff, a Bulgarian American

1 engineer and pilot, emigrated to the United States after World  
2 War I, becoming one of the fathers of civil aviation in the  
3 United States; and

4 WHEREAS, The Macedonian Bulgarian Stoyan Christowe, a  
5 journalist for the Chicago Daily News, wrote a book titled  
6 This is My Country, a semi-autographical book about the  
7 immigrants arriving in the United States from southeast Europe  
8 at the beginning of the 20th century and a book found on the  
9 bedside table of President Franklin D. Roosevelt at the time  
10 of his death; and

11 WHEREAS, John V. Atansoff, a Bulgarian American, created  
12 the first automatic electronic digital computer in 1939, an  
13 invention for which he was presented the National Medal for  
14 Science and Technology by President George H. W. Bush in 1990;  
15 and

16 WHEREAS, In the Spring of 1943, the Bulgarian people  
17 resisted Nazi pressure to deport Bulgarian Jews to Nazi  
18 concentration camps and, in doing so, rescued approximately  
19 50,000 Bulgarian Jews from the worst terrors of the Nazi  
20 regime; and

21 WHEREAS, The Bulgarian people acknowledge with sadness,  
22 grief, and regret the deportation and confinement of over

1 11,000 Jews from the Bulgarian administered Thracian and  
2 Macedonian territories during the war; and

3 WHEREAS, With the conclusion of World War II, Bulgaria  
4 fell victim to communism and was cut off from interaction and  
5 intercourse with the free world by the Soviet government's  
6 Iron Curtain, resulting in the expulsion and flight of some of  
7 its most educated, knowledgeable, and prosperous citizens; and

8 WHEREAS, Illinois became a safe haven for many Bulgarian  
9 political dissidents and refugees, fleeing from the repressive  
10 terrors of communism; and

11 WHEREAS, Communism maintained its firm grip on Bulgaria,  
12 holding the people captive, until the fall of the Berlin Wall  
13 in 1989; and

14 WHEREAS, The fall of the Berlin Wall and the following  
15 dissolution of the Soviet Union freed the Bulgarian people to  
16 proclaim and institute a democratic and multiparty political  
17 system; and

18 WHEREAS, Within 20 years of the fall of communism,  
19 Bulgaria became a member of NATO and an integral part of the  
20 European Union; and

1           WHEREAS, Bulgaria, as a member of NATO, is a strategic  
2 partner to the United States and a key ally in eastern Europe,  
3 contributing to the stability of the Balkan Peninsula and  
4 Black Sea region; and

5           WHEREAS, Bulgaria and the United States entered into the  
6 U.S.-Bulgarian Defense Cooperation Agreement in 2006,  
7 providing the U.S. military access to specified Bulgarian  
8 military facilities, including the Novo Selo Training Area;  
9 and

10           WHEREAS, In 2020, the United States and Bulgaria signed a  
11 10-year Roadmap for Defense Cooperation to foster increased  
12 military cooperation and preparation; and

13           WHEREAS, The U.S. and Bulgarian militaries conduct  
14 numerous military-to-military engagements, involving joint  
15 training exercises and peer-to-peer engagements to enhance  
16 interoperability and cooperation; and

17           WHEREAS, Bulgarian troops have stood alongside American  
18 soldiers in places such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo, and  
19 Bosnia and Herzegovina; and

20           WHEREAS, In 1960, Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley  
21 proclaimed March 3 (Bulgarian Liberation Day) as Bulgaria Day

1 in Chicago, instituting an annual Bulgarian flag-raising  
2 ceremony at Daley Plaza in Chicago that continues until this  
3 day; and

4 WHEREAS, The Chicago metropolitan area is today considered  
5 the home of the largest Bulgarian diaspora; and

6 WHEREAS, The two Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Churches in  
7 the Chicago metropolitan area, St. Sophia (established in  
8 1938) and St. John of Rila (established in 1996), along with  
9 the Bulgarian Evangelical Church (New Life), serve as social  
10 and religious centers, maintaining Bulgarian culture and  
11 traditions; and

12 WHEREAS, Illinois is home to 13 Bulgarian Sunday Schools  
13 that perpetuate Bulgarian language, culture, and history in  
14 our communities; and

15 WHEREAS, Bulgarian Americans have greatly enriched the  
16 cultural, technological, and civic life of Illinois,  
17 contributing through their cultural centers, schools,  
18 churches, dance groups, businesses, and other civic  
19 organizations to the social, cultural, civil, and economic  
20 development of the State of Illinois; therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE

1 HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
2 we send our warmest congratulations and best wishes to the  
3 people of the Republic of Bulgaria as they celebrate the 145th  
4 anniversary of their liberation on March 3, 2023; and be it  
5 further

6 RESOLVED, That we confirm the rich friendship that binds  
7 our peoples together; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That we declare March of 2023 as Bulgarian  
9 American Heritage Month in the State of Illinois; and be it  
10 further

11 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
12 delivered to the Consul General of the Republic of Bulgaria in  
13 Chicago, President Joe Biden, and all members of the Illinois  
14 Congressional Delegation.