



HR0456

LRB103 34877 LAW 64742 r

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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 Captain
4 William "Bill" Pinkney of Chicago, who passed away on August
5 31, 2023; and

6 WHEREAS, Capt. Pinkney was born to Marion Henderson and
7 William Deltorius Pinkney in Chicago on September 15, 1935; he
8 served as a hospital corpsman in the U.S. Navy from 1956 to
9 1964; he became a licensed master of steam, power, and sail
10 vessels of the U.S. Coast Guard in 1986; and

11 WHEREAS, Prior to his sailing career, Capt. Pinkney was
12 largely involved in the cosmetics industry, first working as a
13 freelance make-up artist before becoming a marketing manager
14 for Revlon in 1973 and director of marketing for Johnson
15 Products Company in 1977; he then became director of public
16 information for the City of Chicago's Department of Human
17 Services in 1980; and

18 WHEREAS, Capt. Pinkney became the first Black sailor to
19 solo-circumnavigate the world by way of Cape Horn, Hornos
20 Island, Chile; he embarked on his solo voyage on his cutter The
21 Commitment from Boston, Massachusetts in 1990, and his journey
22 spanned 27,000 miles and lasted 22 months; he then set out on

1 the vessel *Sortilege* to retrace the Middle Passage slave trade
2 routes with his crew and a team of teachers in partnership with
3 PBS and several corporations to both develop a curriculum on
4 the Atlantic slave trade and create a television special; from
5 2000 to 2003, he served as the first captain of the *Amistad*, a
6 replica schooner of the 1839 vessel better known as the
7 freedom revolt ship; he also captained the catamaran *Lady Dee*;
8 in more recent years, he ran a charter boat business in
9 Fajardo, Puerto Rico, taking tourists on cruises throughout
10 the British Virgin Islands and the Caribbean; and

11 WHEREAS, Capt. Pinkney authored three books, his
12 award-winning, 2006 autobiography *As Long as it Takes*, his
13 1994 children's book *Captain Bill Pinkney's Journey*, and his
14 2022 children's book *Sailing Commitment Around the World*; he
15 was also a motivational/inspirational speaker; and

16 WHEREAS, Capt. Pinkney served on the boards of several
17 organizations, including the Mystic Seaport Museum, the
18 National Maritime Historical Society, and the American Sail
19 Training Association; he also belonged to the Belmont Yacht
20 Club as a commodore, the New York Yacht Club, and the
21 International Association of Cape Horners; and

22 WHEREAS, Capt. Pinkney received numerous honors and
23 awards, including being named the 1992 Yachtsman of the Year

1 by the Chicago Yacht Club and the 1999 Chicagoan of the Year by
2 Chicago magazine, inducted into the National Sailing Hall of
3 Fame and receiving its Lifetime Achievement Award in 2021,
4 receiving the America and the Sea Award from the Mystic
5 Seaport Museum in 2022, and earning honorary doctoral degrees
6 from Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Southern Connecticut
7 State University, and Becker College; and

8 WHEREAS, Capt. Pinkney was a great husband, father,
9 mentor, and friend; he will be remembered for his adventurous
10 spirit and his courage in following his dreams; and

11 WHEREAS, Capt. Pinkney is survived by his wife, Migdalia
12 Vachier Pinkney; his daughter, Angela Walton; his sister,
13 Naomi Pinkney; and two grandchildren; therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
15 HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
16 we mourn the passing of Captain William "Bill" Pinkney and
17 extend our sincere condolences to his family, friends, and all
18 who knew and loved him; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
20 presented to the family of Capt. Pinkney as an expression of
21 our deepest sympathy.