



HR0648

LRB103 39748 LAW 70244 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives wish to congratulate the YMCA of Springfield (Springfield Y) on the occasion of its 150th anniversary; and

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WHEREAS, On March 25, 1874, the Springfield Y was formed in the basement of First Presbyterian Church by a group of individuals who saw a need to provide young men with reading rooms and meeting spaces as an alternative to saloons; by 1885, the organization had constructed its first building, which housed meeting spaces, education, exercise spaces, and a dormitory for young men needing shelter; and

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WHEREAS, Before redirecting its focus on sports and fitness, the Springfield Y stood at the forefront of addressing the City of Springfield's joblessness through creating and offering job training and work competency programs for young men; and

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WHEREAS, In the late 1800s, the Springfield Y expanded into young men's sports by organizing baseball teams in the area; the organization proceeded to offer basketball in 1891, bringing basketball leagues to the area by 1908; and

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WHEREAS, The Springfield Y constructed a new building at

1 7th and Capital in 1908, and this property housed some of the
2 first structured fitness programs in Springfield, its
3 competitive sports programs, including basketball and
4 baseball, and one of the area's first indoor swimming pools,
5 which allowed the organization to begin offering swim lessons;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, In the 1930s and 1940s, the Springfield Y created
8 a teen night club, which it hosted in the basement as a fun,
9 safe space for youth to gather and dance; and

10 WHEREAS, Due to the Great Depression and World War II, the
11 Springfield Y postponed constructing a new YMCA facility until
12 1962, when it opened a new building at 4th and Cook; and

13 WHEREAS, The Springfield Y helped bring youth soccer to
14 Springfield in 1967; the organization's soccer program became
15 nationally known by 1974, was one of the first coed youth
16 sports programs in the area, and is regarded as the genesis of
17 every youth, high school, and college soccer program in
18 central Illinois today; and

19 WHEREAS, In the early 1970s, the Springfield Y established
20 before and after school care for low-income families; and

21 WHEREAS, The Springfield Y permitted women to become full

1 members in 1974, two years before the YMCA of the USA adopted
2 its policy and four years before it banned gender
3 discrimination nationwide; and

4 WHEREAS, The Springfield Y created a Women's Health Center
5 at its 4th and Cook location in 1980; that same year, the
6 organization also adopted a single parent discounted family
7 rate; and

8 WHEREAS, The Springfield Y opened a new day camp lodge,
9 YMCA Camp Wa-Kon-Tah, on Lake Springfield in 1988 to serve
10 more children attending its summer camp programs; and

11 WHEREAS, The Springfield Y celebrated its 125th
12 anniversary in 1999; and

13 WHEREAS, The Springfield Y opened its new \$18 million
14 Kerasotes facility, which offered state-of-the-art fitness
15 facilities, pools, and child care facilities, to better serve
16 the community in 2011; and

17 WHEREAS, To replace its aging downtown structure, the
18 Springfield Y opened a new \$33 million downtown facility at
19 4th and Carpenter in 2020; and

20 WHEREAS, After 56 years, the Springfield Y opened its own

1 soccer fields to provide more opportunities for local youth at
2 its Kerasotes facility in 2023; and

3 WHEREAS, That same year, the Springfield Y distributed
4 4,000 food boxes and helped provide relief to local victims of
5 the historic storms that struck from June 29 to June 30; the
6 organization also provided over 1,400 at-risk and underserved
7 kids with several programs and activities, including summer
8 camps, sports, and after school spaces through its Strong Kids
9 Fund; and

10 WHEREAS, The Springfield Y will celebrate its 150th
11 anniversary with a ribbon cutting ceremony and a celebration
12 at the location of the organization's first meeting, First
13 Presbyterian Church, on March 25, 2024; 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 congratulate the YMCA of Springfield (Springfield Y) on its
17 150th anniversary, thank the organization for its dedication
18 to serving the City of Springfield, and wish its staff and
19 volunteers continued success in the years to come; and be it
20 further

21 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
22 presented to the Springfield Y as an expression of our esteem

1 and respect.