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1 SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, A prairie is a type of grassland and is the
3 largest type of habitat in North America; and

4 WHEREAS, Prairies usually form on level or smoothly
5 rolling landscapes; and

6 WHEREAS, Weather conditions in Illinois over thousands of
7 years helped determine that prairies would exist in the State;
8 climate in prairies is characterized by hot, dry summers and
9 cold winters; when these conditions developed approximately
10 8,300 years ago, the tallgrass prairie became a major part of
11 the Illinois landscape; and

12 WHEREAS, In 1820, Illinois had 22 million acres of prairie
13 land and 14 million acres of forests; prairies were mainly in
14 the northern two-thirds of the State with forests in the
15 southern one-third; all but nine counties had large areas of
16 prairies; in central Illinois, trees could only be found in
17 scattered sites called "prairie groves" or along waterways;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, By 1900, most of Illinois' prairies were gone;
20 the majority of these lands were converted to agricultural
21 practices; by 1978, less than 2,300 acres of high quality

1 prairie remained in the entire State; most of the undisturbed
2 prairie sites today are found along railroad rights-of-way, in
3 pioneer cemeteries, and in places that are not suitable for
4 farming; and

5 WHEREAS, Because much of the prairie has been destroyed,
6 many of the organisms that depend upon it for their habitat
7 needs have been forced to move to new habitats or have become
8 very scarce in the State; and

9 WHEREAS, It is not possible to return to the days of vast
10 expanses of prairie in Illinois, as they are gone forever;
11 today, we need to protect, manage, and learn from the prairie
12 remnants that remain and restore prairie where we can;
13 therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL
15 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we declare the third
16 week of September 2023 as "Prairie Week" in the State of
17 Illinois in order to promote the awareness of and appreciation
18 for prairies; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
20 presented to the Department of Natural Resources.