

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Women have contributed greatly to our society;
3 they are pioneers in every sense of the word and have laid
4 the foundation for the future; and

5 WHEREAS, Many women have sacrificed their lives to
6 improve our society by challenging the status quo and using
7 themselves as examples for future generations; it is
8 courageous women like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady
9 Stanton who in 1869 formed the National Woman Suffrage
10 Association to achieve voting rights for women through a
11 Congressional amendment to the Constitution; their goal was
12 achieved in 1920 when the 19th Amendment to the Constitution,
13 granting women the right to vote, was signed; there is also
14 Rosa Parks who is considered by many to be the mother of the
15 civil rights movement; and

16 WHEREAS, Many women established themselves long before
17 the right to vote was granted to them; and

18 WHEREAS, Elizabeth Blackwell in 1849 was the first woman
19 in the United States with a medical degree and Arabella
20 Mansfield in 1869 became the first woman lawyer in the United
21 States when she was granted admission to practice law; in
22 1870, Ada H. Kepley of Illinois graduated from Union College
23 of Law in Chicago, making her the first woman to graduate
24 from a law school; and

25 WHEREAS, In 1872, Victoria Claflin Woodhull became the
26 first woman presidential candidate in the United States when
27 nominated by the National Radical Reformers; another first is
28 Margaret Chase Smith of Maine, who became the first woman to
29 be nominated by a major political party, the Republican
30 Party, when she was nominated for President of the United
31 States in 1964; and

1 WHEREAS, Women have been holding public office since
2 1887, when Susanna Medora Salter was elected the first woman
3 mayor of Argonia, Kansas, becoming the first woman to be
4 elected mayor of an American town; in 1916, Jeannette Rankin
5 of Montana was the first woman elected to the United States
6 House of Representatives; Nellie Tayloe Ross, the first
7 female governor, was elected in the fall of 1924 to succeed
8 her deceased husband as Governor of the State of Wyoming; in
9 1932, Hattie Wyatt Caraway of Arkansas became the first woman
10 elected to the United States Senate; Margaret Chase Smith was
11 the first woman elected to both houses of Congress, serving 8
12 years in the House of Representatives and 24 years in the
13 United States Senate, she was also the first Senator to
14 courageously challenge Senator Joseph McCarthy's brutal
15 tactics and anti-communist crusade on June 1, 1950; Shirley
16 Chisholm of New York was the first African-American woman to
17 serve in Congress and run for President of the United States,
18 and in 1989, Ileana Roslehtinen of Florida became the first
19 Hispanic woman to be elected to the House of Representatives;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, Many presidents know the invaluable
22 contributions that women make, hence appointing them to
23 important positions of leadership and responsibility; in
24 1933, Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed Frances Perkins to
25 serve as Secretary of Labor, making her the first woman to
26 serve on a presidential cabinet; Sandra Day O'Connor became
27 the first female justice on the Supreme Court when President
28 Reagan appointed her to the Supreme Court in 1981; President
29 Bush appointed Antonia Novell in 1990 to the position of
30 Surgeon General of the United States making her the first
31 woman and the first Hispanic to hold this position; Janet
32 Reno was the first woman United States Attorney General when
33 appointed by President Clinton in 1993, and Madeleine
34 Albright was sworn in as U.S. Secretary of State in 1997,

1 making her the first woman to hold this position and the
2 highest ranking woman in the U.S. government; Rosario Marin
3 became the first Hispanic woman to be appointed as Treasurer
4 of the United States and currently serves with Condolezza
5 Rice, the first woman national security adviser; and

6 WHEREAS, The great State of Illinois has also established
7 its firsts in the history of women; Illinois was one of the
8 first states to adopt an amendment granting women the right
9 to vote in 1913, long before the amendment to the
10 constitution was adopted; since then, it has witnessed the
11 election of Carol Moseley-Braun, the first African-American
12 woman elected to the United States Senate in 1992 and Judy
13 Baar Topinka who is the first woman Treasurer for the State
14 of Illinois and the first woman to be elected to a third term
15 for a State-wide office; Corinne Wood became the first female
16 Lieutenant Governor in 1999, and in 2003, Lisa Madigan became
17 the first woman elected to the position of Attorney General;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, Women have made history by being the first to
20 achieve explorations of great risk and courage; Amelia
21 Earhart made history in 1932 when she became the first woman
22 to fly solo across the Atlantic; in 1923, Dr. Sally K. Ride
23 became the first American woman to be sent into space, and
24 Lt. Col. Eileen Collins was the first woman astronaut to
25 command a space shuttle mission in 1999; and

26 WHEREAS, Female leaders such as Linda Chavez-Thompson,
27 the highest ranking person of color in U.S. labor history, is
28 a leading champion in the campaign to revitalize the United
29 States labor movement and direct the union's successful
30 organizing and legislative efforts in states that are
31 unfriendly to labor; Harilyn Rousso is an activist for
32 disabled persons' and women's rights; Wilma L. Vaught,
33 Brigadier General, USAF, is one of the most highly decorated

1 military women in U.S. History; Yuri Kochiyama, who has
2 worked tirelessly to build alliances between diverse cultural
3 groups through social justice; Mae C. Jemison, a Chicago
4 native, who was the first woman of color to go into space
5 aboard the space shuttle Endeavour on September 12, 1992, is
6 now founder and president of two technology companies; Ellen
7 Ochoa Ph.D., the first Hispanic female astronaut and Deputy
8 Director of Johnson Space Center; and Rebecca Walker a strong
9 voice in young women calling for social change, are among the
10 pioneering women who have led the way and confronted
11 challenges to bring about equality and opportunity for all
12 women; women have made great contributions in the arts and
13 sciences, won struggles for humanistic causes of equality and
14 civil rights, created and advanced educational and
15 professional opportunities, and encouraged women to expand on
16 these achievements to create possibilities for generations to
17 come; and

18 WHEREAS, Women have also contributed to our country's
19 freedom by risking their most precious gift, their life, to
20 defend the United States and ensure a democratic future
21 without the threats of terrorism or attacks; women like
22 Specialist Shoshana Johnson, Prisoner of War(POW), from the
23 War on Iraq whom we honor and thank for her allegiance and
24 bravery; and

25 WHEREAS, The Conference of Women Legislators wishes to
26 acknowledge March as Women's History Month and salute all the
27 courageous women who are pioneers of their time and who
28 devoted their lives to contribute to our great country and
29 the world; therefore, be it

30 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
31 NINETY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
32 we commemorate Women's History Month and honor those
33 individuals who have paved the way and inspired the women of

1 today and the future.