



1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, In March of 2006 an historic event will take place
3 in the South American nation of Chile as Michelle Bachelet, the
4 first elected female president, is inaugurated; and

5 WHEREAS, Verónica Michelle Bachelet Jeria was born in
6 Santiago on September 29, 1951, the second child of an air
7 force officer who rose to a general's rank and a housewife who
8 became an archaeologist; her early years were spent in the
9 restrictive but sheltering environment of the Chilean Armed
10 Forces, moving from one military base to another around the
11 country; and

12 WHEREAS, During her teenage years, her father was assigned
13 to the Chilean Embassy in Washington, D.C., and she lived in
14 Bethesda, Maryland, where she attended middle school, learned
15 to speak English fluently, and developed a lifelong love of pop
16 and folk music; and

17 WHEREAS, The family returned to Chile where she attended
18 college, but during the Pinochet dictatorship, which led to her
19 father's death, she and her mother were tortured and then
20 exiled; while in exile, she studied medicine at Humboldt
21 University in East Berlin; upon their return to Chile, she
22 finished medical school, specializing in pediatrics and public
23 health; and

24 WHEREAS, In 1994, after having worked in AIDS and
25 epidemiological programs, she became an adviser to the Ministry
26 of Health; she went on to study at the Inter-American Defense
27 College in Washington, D.C., and after her return, she went to
28 work in the Defense Ministry and was also elected to the
29 political commission of the Socialist Party, specializing in
30 defense and military issues; and

1 WHEREAS, She was then appointed by current president,
2 Ricardo Lagos, to lead the Defense Ministry, becoming the first
3 woman to hold that post; her election as president makes her
4 the first woman to be elected president of Chile and the first
5 woman president in South America who didn't rise on the
6 political power of her husband; therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
8 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
9 together with the Conference of Women Legislators, we
10 congratulate Michelle Bachelet on being the first elected
11 female president of Chile; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
13 presented to President-Elect Bachelet as an expression of our
14 esteem and with our best wishes for her term in office.