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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The Illinois General Assembly wishes to present this resolution as a tribute to and acknowledgment of Oprah Winfrey's contributions to the State of Illinois, the nation, and the world; we benefit immensely from her presence in Illinois; and

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WHEREAS, Oprah Gail Winfrey was born on January 29, 1954 in Kosciusko, Mississippi; and

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WHEREAS, She began her broadcasting career at WVOL radio in Nashville while still in high school; at the age of 19, she became the youngest person and the first African-American woman to anchor the news at Nashville's WTVF-TV; and

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WHEREAS, In 1976, she moved to Baltimore, Maryland to join WJZ-TV news as a co-anchor of the Six O'Clock News, and in 1978, discovered her talent for hosting talk shows when she became co-host of WJZ-TV's talk show "People Are Talking", while continuing to serve as anchor and news reporter; in January 1984, she moved to Chicago to host WLS-TV's morning talk show "AM Chicago", which became the number one local talk show just one month after she began; in less than a year, the show expanded to one hour and, in September 1985, was renamed "The Oprah Winfrey Show"; in 1986, "The Oprah Winfrey Show" was

1 syndicated and aired in 107 countries with 23 million viewers;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, She has impacted the media of television,
4 publishing, film, philanthropy, education, and health and
5 fitness; and

6 WHEREAS, In the television medium, the film medium, and the
7 print medium, she serves as chairperson of HARPO, Inc., HARPO
8 Productions, Inc.; HARPO Studios Inc., HARPO Films, Inc., HARPO
9 Print, LLC, and HARPO Video, Inc.; and

10 WHEREAS, She has received numerous awards, including the
11 George Foster Peabody Individual Achievement Award (1996); the
12 International Radio and Television Society's "Broadcaster of
13 the Year" Award (1996); Newsweek's "Most Important Person" in
14 books and media, TV Guide's "Television Performer of the Year"
15 (1997); Time magazine's "100 Most Influential People of the
16 20th Century", the National Academy of Television Arts and
17 Sciences' Lifetime Achievement Award (1998); the National Book
18 Foundation's 50th Anniversary Gold Medal (1999); the Bob Hope
19 Humanitarian Award, Broadcasting & Cable's Hall of Fame (2002);
20 Association of American Publishers AAP Honors award (2003);
21 National Association of Broadcasters Distinguished Service
22 Award; and Time Magazine's "100 Most Influential People in the
23 World" (2004); and

1 WHEREAS, After receiving 39 Daytime Emmy Awards, seven for
2 Outstanding Host, nine for Outstanding Talk Show, 21 in the
3 Creative Arts categories, and one for Oprah's work as
4 supervising producer of the ABC After School Special "Shades of
5 Single Protein", Oprah removed herself from future Emmy
6 consideration in 1999, and the show followed suit in 2000; and

7 WHEREAS, Her never-ending philanthropy has been
8 exemplified by such activities as ChristmasKindness South
9 Africa 2002; Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls-South
10 Africa; and the Oprah Winfrey Scholars Program; among her many
11 ventures that have improved the lives of countless individuals
12 are Oprah's Angel Network; Oprah's Book Club; the Live Your
13 Best Life Tour; her service as national spokesperson for "A
14 Better Chance"; and her service as an advocate for the National
15 Child Protection Act, which was signed on December 20, 1993 by
16 President Clinton and declared the "Oprah Bill"; therefore, be
17 it

18 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
19 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
20 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that the last week of February in
21 2007 and each subsequent year shall be known as Oprah Winfrey
22 Week to recognize the innumerable achievements of Ms. Winfrey,
23 as well as her mark on the world as an African-American woman;

1 and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
3 presented to Oprah Winfrey as an expression of our utmost
4 respect and esteem.