



HR1319

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are pleased to congratulate the staff of the
4 Furst-McNess Company on the 100th anniversary of the
5 agribusiness and consumer goods institution; and

6 WHEREAS, Frank E. Furst, an attorney and the son of
7 pioneers to Stephenson County, and Frederick W. McNess, a
8 pharmacist and transplant to Freeport from Ohio, combined their
9 talents to a singular and novel business concept in 1908 with
10 the founding core values of quality, safety, and innovation,
11 epitomized in the first self-regulating policy of sanitary
12 safety seals on every product and instituted decades before any
13 government regulation required they ensure the integrity of
14 their products and offer this added layer of protection for
15 their customers; and

16 WHEREAS, The confidence of these two founders who came of
17 age as entrepreneurs in an industrial town was mirrored by
18 local investors, salesmen, and customers, the farm-to-farm
19 direct sales company that started on \$21,000 became one of
20 Freeport's most prominent industries, known for its extracts
21 and spices (and its premium ingredients, including Madagascar
22 vanilla beans), and entered the international stage almost
23 immediately after its founding; and

1 WHEREAS, The Furst-McNess Company moved to the Sunlight
2 Laboratory in 1919, undertook a 60,000 square-foot expansion of
3 in 1929 (the year the stock market crashed) and another 60,000
4 square-foot expansion in 1948, and completed a nearly \$2
5 million renovation of the building on Clark Street in 1980; and

6 WHEREAS, An early commitment to quality, safety, and
7 innovation has consistently been manifested over 100 years with
8 the development of a new tablet making process during World War
9 II to supply the U.S. Army with vanilla tablets, to eliminate
10 the vice of vanilla extract and its alcohol content in war
11 zones, and won the Freeport manufacturer the majority of war
12 contracts because of its efficient tablet making, producing
13 nearly one billion vanilla tablets during World War II, which
14 became an export business when the government sold its
15 surpluses; the themes of quality, safety, and innovation have
16 consistently recurred, when the company launched its vitamin
17 and mineral premixes in 1958, and was one of the first to
18 develop computerized programs for ration-balancing in the
19 1980s; and

20 WHEREAS, The Furst-McNess Company acquired Miracle Feeds
21 in 1992 from John Labatt Limited to become a North-American
22 based, multinational company with offices in London, Ontario,
23 and with the knitting together of two organizations, became a

1 niche market player in the distribution of ethanol and biofuel
2 residuals, for the first time offering livestock producers a
3 complete feed (vitamin and mineral premixes, along with
4 commodities), and now is a beacon in the agribusiness industry,
5 with a vision for helping to build sustainable models in
6 agriculture; and

7 WHEREAS, Following the success of its production of Spike
8 O'Dell's Bite Your Butt Mustard, a collaboration with the
9 Mustard Museum in Mt. Horeb, Wis., the Furst-McNess Company
10 returned to its roots in the consumer goods industry in 1997
11 when it unveiled the Terrapin Ridge line of gourmet condiments,
12 including Wasabi Lime mustard before wasabi products had been
13 incorporated into American foods; manufacturing continued in
14 the consumer goods vein with products sold under the McNess
15 trademark, and with private label production for two Fortune
16 500 companies; and

17 WHEREAS, With the acquisition of the family business, Aero
18 Group in 2003, the company showed its committed to technology
19 as a core value, and now offers broadband and Voice Over
20 Internet Phone Services (VOIP), as well as computer networking
21 for commercial and business clients; and

22 WHEREAS, The family business has entered its fourth
23 generation, maintaining its headquarters in Freeport and

1 giving back to the local community in each generation, and has
2 survived the trials of history over the course of one century
3 because of its commitment to enduring values of quality,
4 safety, and innovation, and its adaptability to changing
5 marketplaces in new eras; therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
7 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
8 congratulate the staff of the Furst-McNess Company of Freeport
9 on the 100th anniversary; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
11 presented to Martha Furst, President and CEO of the FurstMcNess
12 Company, as a symbol of our esteem.