



HR0186

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1

HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The ancient Greeks developed the concept of
3 democracy, in which the supreme power to govern was vested in
4 the people; and

5 WHEREAS, On March 25, 1821, the Feast Day of the
6 Annunciation, the Greek nation reclaimed its ancient heritage
7 as the "Cradle of Democracy" by throwing off the yoke of
8 oppression which had enslaved its people since the fall of
9 Constantinople in 1453; conquered by the Ottoman Turks in the
10 15th century, Greece waged a successful War of Independence
11 (1821-1829) and reinstated a democratic form of government;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, Greece celebrates two important events in its
14 history on March 25, the beginning of the revolution that freed
15 the Greek people from the Ottoman Empire, and the Greek
16 Orthodox Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, It was for that reason that on March 25, 1821,
19 Bishop Germanos of Patras chose that day to deliver a message
20 of a new life to the people of Greece and hoisted the Greek
21 flag in defiance of the Turks at the Monastery of Ayia Lavra
22 near Kalavrita; and

1 WHEREAS, The Founding Fathers of the United States drew
2 heavily on the political experience and philosophy of ancient
3 Greece in forming our representative democracy; and

4 WHEREAS, Greek Commander in Chief Petros Mavromichalis, a
5 founder of the modern Greek state, said to the citizens of the
6 United States in 1821 that "it is in your land that liberty has
7 fixed her abode and in imitating you, we shall imitate our
8 ancestors and be thought worthy of them if we succeed in
9 resembling you"; and

10 WHEREAS, Greece played a major role in the World War II
11 struggle to protect freedom and democracy through such bravery
12 as was shown in the historic Battle of Crete, which provided
13 the Axis land war with its first major setback, setting off a
14 chain of events that significantly affected the outcome of
15 World War II; and

16 WHEREAS, The price for Greece in holding our common values
17 in their region was high as hundreds of thousands of civilians
18 were killed in Greece during World War II; and

19 WHEREAS, Throughout the 20th century, Greece was one of
20 only 3 countries in the world beyond the former British Empire
21 that allied with the United States in every major international

1 conflict; and

2 WHEREAS, Greece is a strategic partner and ally of the
3 United States in bringing political stability and economic
4 development to the volatile Balkan region, having invested over
5 \$10,000,000,000 in the region; and

6 WHEREAS, Greece was extraordinarily responsive to requests
7 by the United States during the war in Iraq, as Greece
8 immediately granted unlimited access to its airspace and the
9 base in Souda Bay, and many ships of the United States that
10 delivered troops, cargo, and supplies to Iraq were refueled in
11 Greece; and

12 WHEREAS, In August 2004, the Olympic games came home to
13 Athens, Greece, the land of their ancient birthplace 2,500
14 years ago, and the city of their modern revival in 1896; and

15 WHEREAS, Greece received world-wide praise for its
16 extraordinary handling of over 14,000 athletes from 202
17 countries and over 2,000,000 spectators and journalists during
18 the 2004 Olympics, which it did so efficiently, securely, and
19 with its famous Greek hospitality; and

20 WHEREAS, The unprecedented security effort in Greece for
21 the first Olympics to be held after the attacks on the United

1 States on September 11, 2001, included a record-setting
2 expenditure of over \$1,390,000,000 and an assignment of over
3 70,000 security personnel, as well as the utilization of an
4 8-country Olympic Security Advisory Group that included the
5 United States; and

6 WHEREAS, Greece, located in a region where Christianity
7 meets Islam and Judaism, maintains excellent relations with
8 both Muslim nations and Israel; and

9 WHEREAS, the Government of Greece has had extraordinary
10 success in recent years in furthering cross-cultural
11 understanding and reducing tensions between themselves and
12 Turkey; and

13 WHEREAS, Greece and the United States are at the forefront
14 of the effort for freedom, democracy, peace, stability, and
15 human rights; and

16 WHEREAS, Those ideals, as well as others, have forged a
17 close bond between these 2 nations and their peoples; and

18 WHEREAS, March 25, 2009, marks the 188th anniversary of the
19 beginning of the revolution that freed the Greek people from
20 the nearby Ottoman Empire; and

1 WHEREAS, It is proper and desirable to celebrate this
2 anniversary with the Greek people and to reaffirm the
3 democratic principles from which these two great nations were
4 born; therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
6 NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
7 designate March 25, 2009, and each March 25th thereafter, as
8 Greek Independence Day and encourage the people of the State of
9 Illinois to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies and
10 activities; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
12 presented to the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago and the
13 Consul General of Greece in Chicago.