



HR0282

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are pleased to congratulate Mary
4 Gonzalez-Koenig on the occasion of her retirement from the
5 National Latino Education Institute after 44 years of dedicated
6 service as the organization's founder and president; and

7 WHEREAS, Mary Gonzalez-Koenig was born and raised in the
8 City of Chicago; her father labored as a blue-collar worker and
9 her mother was a dedicated homemaker; her parents, like many
10 immigrant families today, had to assimilate into an American
11 lifestyle while teaching their children to embrace their
12 Mexican heritage; growing up in a dual-culture, Mary understood
13 that just like her family, many other immigrant families came
14 to the United States in pursuit of a better life; and

15 WHEREAS, Mary Gonzalez-Koenig has had a long career of
16 community and public service; her record of service began in
17 the early 1960s while working at a settlement house, where she
18 became actively involved in grass-roots movements advocating
19 employment and training programs for the poor; during the
20 1970's, while performing community work, she was also dedicated
21 to raising her family in the Pilsen area, a port-of-entry and a
22 predominantly Latino neighborhood in Chicago where the
23 majority of families are Mexican immigrants; as a proud mother

1 of four with thirteen grandchildren, her community work has
2 always instituted the notion of family integrity as the focal
3 point of her endeavors; and

4 WHEREAS, One of Mary Gonzalez-Koenig's greatest
5 achievements was the founding in 1972 of the Spanish Coalition
6 for Jobs, Inc. (SCJ), a not-for-profit organization dedicated
7 to providing economic development programs to community
8 residents such as job placement, skills training, and
9 educational and supportive services; born out of a grass-roots
10 effort by community agencies, SCJ advocated for affirmative
11 action, equal opportunity, and recognition of Latino
12 participation in the workforce at Fortune 500 corporations;
13 from its humble beginnings, SCJ eventually became one of the
14 largest Latino employment, training, and advocacy non-profit
15 agencies in Illinois; SCJ is also a nationally-accredited
16 business and training center approved by the Illinois State
17 Board of Education and the U.S. Department of Education; and

18 WHEREAS, In 1979, after realizing the significant lack of
19 Latinos behind and in front of media cameras of local
20 television stations, Mary Gonzalez-Koenig founded and became
21 Chairperson of the Latino Council On the Media (LCOM), an
22 organization dedicated to increasing the hiring and promotion
23 of Latinos in print and electronic journalism; LCOM's other
24 objectives include student internships, economic development,

1 community involvement and support, and the balanced portrayal
2 of Latinos to combat the negative stereotypical reporting of
3 the Latino community; and

4 WHEREAS, In 1989, Mary Gonzalez-Koenig was appointed to
5 serve as Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Employment and
6 Training by Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley in recognition of
7 her leadership qualities; holding the position for five years,
8 she was successful in bringing together business, educators,
9 and government to develop the "YES Chicago" school-to-work
10 transition programs; she subsequently became the Executive
11 Director of Corporate Services and Enrollment Management at the
12 City Colleges of Chicago, a position she held for four years;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Mary Gonzalez-Koenig has served on many civic,
15 business, neighborhood, and service organizations, including
16 the Pilsen-Neighbors Community Council, the Metropolitan
17 Economic Development Alliance, the National Council of La Raza,
18 the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed
19 Officials, the Chicago Boys and Girls Club, and Voices for
20 Illinois Children; she has received numerous awards for her
21 civic and community contributions, including an Honorary
22 Degree of Doctor of Public Service by the College of Office
23 Technology in Chicago and the distinguished National Hispanic
24 Hero Award of the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Conference; and

1 WHEREAS, Mary Gonzalez-Koenig serves as a model of hard
2 work, integrity, and dedication for the people of the State of
3 Illinois; therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
5 NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
6 congratulate Mary Gonzalez-Koenig on the occasion of her
7 retirement and wish her many happy and healthy retirement
8 years; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
10 presented to Mary Gonzalez-Koenig as a symbol of our esteem and
11 respect.