



HR0436

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are pleased to congratulate Graciela Shelley
4 on the occasion of her retirement as principal of Darwin
5 Elementary School in Chicago; and

6 WHEREAS, Graciela Shelley is a native of Santiago, Chile,
7 where she graduated from Sacred Heart preparatory school; she
8 met her husband, John, when he was on a two-year Peace Corps
9 assignment in Chile; soon after their marriage, the couple came
10 to the United States in 1965; before beginning her career in
11 the Chicago Public School system, she devoted herself to
12 raising her three children, Robert, Stephanie, and Michael, in
13 Evanston; and

14 WHEREAS, Graciela Shelley received her bachelor's degree
15 with High Honors from Northeastern University, her master's
16 degree in Administration from Chicago State University, and her
17 Educational Specialist degree from Northern Illinois
18 University; she has also attended summer institutes at the
19 Universidad Complutense in Madrid, Spain, the Universidad de
20 Puebla in Mexico, the University of Loyola in Rome, Italy, and
21 the CIEPE in Paris, France; and

22 WHEREAS, Graciela Shelley has worked for the Chicago Public

1 Schools for the past 32 years; she was hired in 1977 as a
2 Spanish Bilingual teacher at Pierce School, where she taught
3 for six years; for the next 26 years, she served as a school
4 administrator, beginning her work as a District and City-wide
5 Bilingual Facilitator, followed by her role as a District Three
6 Administrator; and

7 WHEREAS, In 1995, Graciela Shelley was appointed principal
8 of Darwin School; as principal, she first focused on
9 establishing high expectations for students and teachers in a
10 goal-oriented and data-driven effort to improve student
11 performance; as a result of her leadership, Darwin School has
12 been named an AMPS school for its excellence in academic
13 programs and administrative practices; the school was also
14 recognized for student improvement by former school system CEO
15 Arne Duncan and was identified by Chicago Mayor Richard Daley
16 as one of 27 CPS schools that have demonstrated continuous
17 gains on the ISAT for the past seven years; and

18 WHEREAS, As principal of a low-income school, Graciela
19 Shelley has sought to expand the life experience and awareness
20 of her students beyond what they would obtain from an academic
21 curriculum alone; through international partnerships with the
22 Municipality of Milan, Italy, and its local schools, and with
23 local schools in Santiago, Chile, she has sent students to
24 Italy and Chile and has sponsored teacher exchange programs

1 with both countries and a reciprocal student exchange with
2 Chile; she has also reached out to the local community to make
3 connections with role-modeling professionals, such as the
4 Chicago legal firm of Holland and Knight, which has established
5 an important relationship with students at Darwin; on a weekly
6 basis, the firm hosts students in their offices downtown and
7 visits the school for a variety of activities, including
8 tutoring in reading and the discussion of legal cases; and

9 WHEREAS, Following her retirement, Graciela Shelley plans
10 to write, work with social justice organizations, travel, and
11 spend quality time with her six grandchildren; and

12 WHEREAS, Graciela Shelley serves as a model of hard work,
13 integrity, and dedication for the people of the State of
14 Illinois; therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
16 NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
17 congratulate Graciela Shelley on the occasion of her retirement
18 and wish her many happy and healthy retirement years; and be it
19 further

20 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
21 presented to Graciela Shelley as a symbol of our esteem and
22 respect.