



HR0762

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Governor Pat Quinn has proposed to convey the
3 Thomson Correctional Center to the United States federal
4 government for use as a prison and detention facility for
5 persons subject to the Military Commissions Act of 2006; and

6 WHEREAS, Persons subject to the Military Commissions Act
7 include persons accused of complicity in some of the gravest
8 war crimes ever committed by members of the human race; and

9 WHEREAS, The Thomson Correctional Center was designed and
10 built as a 1,600-bed conventional maximum-security prison
11 facility, with the security perimeter of a conventional prison,
12 and is well-suited for this purpose; and

13 WHEREAS, Nothing in this Resolution should be taken as
14 opposition to using the Thomson Correctional Center as a
15 conventional 1,600-bed maximum-security prison; we recognize
16 that this would create much-needed jobs for the Thomson area,
17 including employment for a significant number of workers in
18 northwestern Illinois; and

19 WHEREAS, Nothing in this Resolution should be taken as
20 opposition to the sale, at a fair price, of the Thomson
21 Correctional Center, to the Federal Bureau of Prisons, for use

1 as a conventional 1,600-bed prison facility, the purpose for
2 which it was designed; and

3 WHEREAS, The Quinn proposal contemplates using Thomson,
4 not as a conventional 1,600-bed maximum-security prison, but as
5 a federal detention facility for approximately 200 persons
6 subject to the Military Commissions Act of 2006, which covers
7 unlawful enemy combatants engaged in hostilities against the
8 United States; and

9 WHEREAS, Unlawful enemy combatants subject to the Military
10 Commissions Act of 2006 are currently housed at Camp Delta,
11 Camp V, and Camp Echo at the Guantanamo Bay detention camp at
12 the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba, where they are guarded
13 by United States armed forces; and

14 WHEREAS, If unlawful enemy combatants against the United
15 States, subject to the Military Commissions Act of 2006, are
16 kept in detention, they ought to be kept in a purpose-built
17 facility that has been constructed for the specialized duty of
18 keeping them in confinement under extraordinary conditions of
19 high security, including: (a) the maintenance of a suitable
20 security perimeter around the facility, and (b) specially
21 trained and specialized security guards, who should either be
22 members of the U.S. armed forces or be persons who have
23 undergone training equivalent to members of the U.S. armed

1 forces; and

2 WHEREAS, While the current headcount of persons who will be
3 treated indefinitely as detainees subject to the Military
4 Commissions Act of 2006 is not public information, a current
5 press account published in the "New York Times" on May 21, 2009
6 indicates that the headcount of detainees currently at
7 Guantanamo Bay is approximately 200; and of that number
8 somewhat more than 100 are scheduled, under the current policy
9 of the administration of President Barack Obama, to be moved to
10 the United States; and of that number 50 to 100 are likely to
11 be classified as being too dangerous to ever release; and

12 WHEREAS, This group of 200 Guantanamo Bay detainees,
13 classified as unlawful enemy combatants subject to the Military
14 Commissions Act of 2006, is the core group of people at the
15 heart of this debate over the future of the Thomson
16 Correctional Center; other unlawful enemy combatants may be
17 captured and detained in the future, but this is the headcount
18 of people who are the subject of this debate right now; and

19 WHEREAS, Even assuming that the Thomson Correctional
20 Center were to be adaptively re-used as a federal detention
21 center for up to 200 detainees, it will likely house far fewer
22 prisoners, and create fewer jobs, than if it is put into use as
23 the 1,600-bed conventional maximum-security prison that it was

1 designed to be; and

2 WHEREAS, There is ongoing concern that the persons detained
3 in Guantanamo have allies around the world who may respond to
4 these detentions with an ongoing threat of homicidal violence
5 that will stretch indefinitely into the future; and

6 WHEREAS, The federal administrative decision to close the
7 current detention facilities at Guantanamo Bay, and transfer
8 these detainees to the populated territory of the United
9 States, and the proposal that they be detained in Illinois,
10 does not take account of this ongoing and indefinite threat to
11 the people of the United States, or the people of Illinois; and

12 WHEREAS, Exercising its oversight responsibilities, the
13 United States Senate, on May 19, 2009, by a bipartisan vote of
14 90-6, stripped language from the Supplemental Appropriations
15 Act of 2009 that would have appropriated \$80 million to
16 implement the closure of the detention camps at Guantanamo,
17 thereby expressing the sense of a consensus majority of the
18 Senate that this threat should not be imposed upon the
19 peaceful, law-abiding people of the United States; therefore,
20 be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
22 NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that

1 the 1,600-bed Thomson Correctional Center, located in a
2 thickly-populated rural section of northwest Illinois near the
3 Mississippi River, is not a suitable facility, nor does it have
4 a suitable security perimeter, nor is it placed in a suitable
5 location, for the indefinite detention of up to 200 unlawful
6 enemy combatants who are subject to the Military Commissions
7 Act of 2006; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That Governor Patrick Quinn and his
9 administration should immediately halt all negotiations or
10 contacts with the U.S. Federal Bureau of Prisons, the U.S.
11 Department of Homeland Security, and all other relevant federal
12 offices and departments, relating to the proposed transfer of
13 the Thomson Correctional Center to the federal government for
14 purposes of a Military Commissions Act of 2006 detention
15 facility, until they initiate consultations with the Illinois
16 General Assembly and receive its consent to undertake this
17 move; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That we urge the Quinn administration to redouble
19 its efforts to find a use for the Thomson Correctional Center
20 as the 1,600-bed maximum-security conventional correctional
21 facility, the functional use for which it was designed; and be
22 it further

23 RESOLVED, That we urge the administration of President

1 Barack Obama, in the strongest terms, to reconsider its
2 decision to close the detention facilities at Guantanamo Bay,
3 Cuba, on the grounds that this location, within the island of
4 Cuba, guarded by the armed forces of the United States, is by
5 far the best and safest location for the indefinite detention
6 of unlawful enemy combatants subject to the Military
7 Commissions Act of 2006; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That we commend the United States Senate for its
9 defense of the people of the United States, and urge the
10 Congress to maintain its position in favor of the continued
11 operation of Guantanamo Bay and against the transfer of
12 unlawful enemy combatants to the territory of the United
13 States; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this Resolution be
15 transmitted to the President of the United States, to the two
16 United States Senators from Illinois, to the nineteen members
17 of the United States House of Representatives from Illinois,
18 and to the Governor of Illinois.