



HJ0087

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The State of Illinois has long welcomed immigrants to our State and valued the contributions of newcomers to our State's economic, social, cultural, and civic life; and

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WHEREAS, The State of Illinois has supported and encouraged legal immigrants in their desire to become United States citizens; and

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WHEREAS In 2004, the State of Illinois began the New Americans Initiative (NAI), a partnership between the Illinois Department of Human Services and the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR); and

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WHEREAS, NAI engages 31 community-based organizations to organize volunteer workshops, conduct outreach events, and provide immigration legal services to assist long-term lawful permanent residents in becoming United States citizens; and

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WHEREAS, NAI works throughout the State of Illinois and with the broad diversity of the State's immigrant population, including Latinos, Poles, Russians, Chinese, Indians, Koreans, Filipinos, Arabs, Africans, and other immigrant and refugee groups; and

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1 WHEREAS, Since 2005, NAI has organized 1,196 citizenship
2 workshops that have engaged 19,723 volunteer community members
3 and lawyers to assist 58,180 immigrants with their applications
4 for United States citizenship; and

5 WHEREAS, NAI has also provided information regarding
6 citizenship to 464,050 immigrants in 25 languages through
7 outreach, a website (www.beacitizen.org) and a toll-free
8 information line; and

9 WHEREAS, NAI led a campaign to increase the census return
10 rate by knocking on 107,833 doors in 26 immigrant communities,
11 a campaign that produced increases of up to 18% in return rates
12 and will bring \$348 million in additional dollars to Illinois
13 over next 10 years; and

14 WHEREAS, NAI has emerged as a national model for effective
15 citizenship assistance services emulated by other states and
16 communities; and

17 WHEREAS, NAI was awarded the prestigious E Pluribus Unum
18 prize in 2010 by the Migration Policy Institute as one of the
19 nation's "exceptional initiatives that promote immigrant
20 integration"; and

21 WHEREAS, Based on the success of NAI, ICIRR co-founded and

1 leads the National Partnership for New Americans, a new
2 multi-state organization created to spread the citizenship
3 model pioneered in Illinois; therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
5 NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
6 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we commend the Illinois
7 Department of Human Services and the Illinois Coalition for
8 Immigrant and Refugee Rights for their work on the New
9 Americans Initiative; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
11 presented to the Illinois Department of Human Services and the
12 Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights to show our
13 appreciation for their work on the New Americans Initiative.