



HR0503

LRB097 13142 KXB 57648 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of  
3 Representatives are pleased to congratulate the City of Ottawa  
4 on the dedication of the Ottawa Radium Girls Memorial; and

5           WHEREAS, A statue of a radium worker will be dedicated on  
6 September 2, 2011 at the northwest corner of Clinton and  
7 Jefferson streets, the former home of Luminous Processes; the  
8 life-size statue is to serve as a memorial to the women who  
9 worked at the Radium Dial and Luminous Processes factories in  
10 Ottawa and consequently died from radium poisoning; and

11           WHEREAS, The bronze statue is of a woman holding flowers to  
12 symbolize hope and life in one hand and paintbrushes in the  
13 other; the statue was designed by Bill Piller, a Mendota  
14 sculptor; his daughter, Madeline, became fascinated with the  
15 story while researching a class project and began raising  
16 pledges to create the monument; and

17           WHEREAS, The Radium Girls were young women who worked at  
18 the Radium Dial and Luminous Processes factories in Ottawa,  
19 starting in 1922; young women were excited to work for Radium  
20 Dial: the workplace was nice, the work was fun, and the pay was  
21 great; and

1           WHEREAS, The women were paid by the piece to apply paint  
2 neatly and evenly to the numbers on clock faces; to ensure  
3 thin, even, accurate strokes, the dial painters were instructed  
4 to "point" the brush frequently by licking its end, not being  
5 aware that the radium used to make the paint glow would soon be  
6 discovered to be a very dangerous radioactive substance; they  
7 also had no idea that by lip pointing their brushes they were  
8 ingesting enough of it to cause painful, crippling cancers and  
9 death; and

10           WHEREAS, In 1925 Radium Dial became aware of the  
11 occupational danger of radium radiation exposure; Radium Dial  
12 workers were examined by the company, and although many women  
13 already showed signs of radium poisoning, they were never told;  
14 and

15           WHEREAS, In 1934, 7 women, who would become known as "The  
16 Society of the Living Dead," began a series of legal battles to  
17 win financial compensation for their radium poisoning; each one  
18 received small financial settlements; therefore, be it

19           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
20 NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
21 we congratulate the City of Ottawa on the dedication of the  
22 Ottawa Radium Girls Memorial and honor the brave women who  
23 fought to change working conditions in the State of Illinois;

1 and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
3 presented to the City of Ottawa as a symbol of our respect and  
4 esteem.