



HR1051

LRB098 21050 GRL 58781 r

1

HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, The phenomenal growth of Waukegan Township,  
3           located 36 miles north of Chicago and 60 miles south of  
4           Milwaukee, can be attributed to industry, Lake Michigan, and  
5           the railroads; toward the middle of the 19th century, Waukegan  
6           Township became a thriving center of industry; and

7           WHEREAS, The Washburn and Moen Manufacturing Company of  
8           Worcester, Massachusetts established a wire mill, the Waukegan  
9           Works, along Lake Michigan; the land for its Illinois operation  
10          was purchased on January 16, 1891 at the recommendation of its  
11          advisers, Philip W. Moen, Charles G. Washburn, Fred H. Daniels,  
12          and Edwin Lenox, and included much of the Elisha Wadsworth  
13          Estate; in March of 1891, construction of the Mill complex was  
14          started on a 40 acre plot; by September, a galvanizing  
15          operation began; in November, the company's subdivision, The  
16          Waukegan Highlands, was platted west of the mill; the first  
17          wire was drawn in December; and

18          WHEREAS, In 1892, the company, a principal manufacturer of  
19          Glidden barbed wire, introduced Waukegan Barbed Wire, invented  
20          by John D. Curtis; and

21          WHEREAS, The establishment of the plant led both an  
22          industrial and population boom, with workers from Worcester and

1 immigrants from Finland, Sweden, and Eastern Europe moving to  
2 the Washburn and Moen subdivision; Slovenian workers called the  
3 area "the Kompanija" - the Company District; first named South  
4 Waukegan, the community that rapidly developed near the mill  
5 was later incorporated as North Chicago; and

6 WHEREAS, The first wave of industrialization attracted  
7 Eastern Europeans, Finns, and Swedes; during the 1920s, the  
8 next round of manufacturing expansion, Waukegan's population  
9 went up about 75%, drawing upon African-Americans and Southern  
10 whites; by 1955, there were around 19,000 manufacturing jobs in  
11 the Waukegan-North Chicago economic complex; all the workers  
12 who came for those jobs were critical to growing thriving  
13 communities; and

14 WHEREAS, The American Steel and Wire Company, which later  
15 became the United States Steel Corporation, acquired the Mill  
16 in 1899; by the 1950s, the company had become one of Lake  
17 County's largest employers; and

18 WHEREAS, Many companies, including American Steel & Wire  
19 (United States Steel), Cyclone Fence, Fansteel, and Chicago  
20 Hardware Foundry, among others, forged not just metals, but the  
21 means of growth and support for Waukegan Township; and

22 WHEREAS, In 1980, the Steel Worker Retirees Club was

1 created to further the interests of retired steelworkers and  
2 their spouses and better the communities where they live; and

3 WHEREAS, The Steel Worker Retirees Club welcomes any person  
4 as a member who was in good standing with the United Steel  
5 Workers of America at the time of their retirement; and

6 WHEREAS, The Steel Worker Retirees Club includes any person  
7 as a member who was a retiree, spouse, widow, or widower of a  
8 former employee of United States Steel, Waukegan Works, Cyclone  
9 Fence, and the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway; and

10 WHEREAS, The Wire Mill Workers Retirees Club has been an  
11 integral part of the communities of Waukegan and North Chicago;  
12 therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
14 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
15 we recognize and congratulate the members of the Wire Mill  
16 Workers Retirees Club and their families at their annual  
17 reunion dinner; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
19 presented to the Wire Mill Workers Retirees Club as an  
20 expression of our esteem and respect.