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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Under the misnomer of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the current North Korean government is a continuation of the absolute dynastic dictatorship started by Kim Il-sung in 1948; following his death in 1994, Kim Il-sung was succeeded by his eldest son, Kim Jong-il; on December 17, 2011, Kim Jong-il died and his youngest son, Kim Jong-un, was immediately installed as his successor; the majority of the North Korean people have experienced unimaginable suffering during the regimes of all 3 dictators; and

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WHEREAS, The North Korean government's top priority is total control of all aspects of life in North Korea; all information, artistic expression, academic works, and media activity within its borders is strictly limited, as is freedom of speech; and

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WHEREAS, The North Korean government has executed political prisoners, other outspoken opponents of the regime, and certain "repatriated" defectors, as well as members of outlawed religions and organizations; and

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WHEREAS, The North Korean government currently holds almost a quarter of a million political prisoners in camps under deplorable conditions; and

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1 WHEREAS, In the early 1990s, more than 2 million
2 inhabitants of North Korea died of starvation due to the
3 failure of the North Korean government-operated centralized
4 agricultural and distribution systems; a 2002 United
5 Nations-European Union survey indicated that one out of every
6 10 North Korean children are acutely malnourished and 4 out of
7 10 are chronically malnourished; and

8 WHEREAS, The North Korean government continues to prevent
9 the monitoring of the delivery of food aid provided by the
10 World Food Program since 1995; and

11 WHEREAS, The resultant risk of starvation, threat of
12 persecution, and lack of personal freedoms have caused hundreds
13 of thousands of North Koreans to flee, primarily into China,
14 where the women are often at risk of being kidnapped and sold
15 as brides, concubines, or forced into prostitution; and

16 WHEREAS, The Chinese government has consistently detained,
17 convicted, and imprisoned foreign aid workers who, in accord
18 with United Nations conventions and protocol, assist these
19 North Korean aliens; and

20 WHEREAS, While the responsibility for domestic refugee
21 resettlement naturally devolves to the South Koreans, the

1 United States should play a leadership role in addressing the
2 plight of these refugees and develop international solutions
3 for this humanitarian crisis; therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL
5 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we express our
6 solidarity with the North Korean refugees in their quest for
7 relief from hunger and persecution; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That we articulate our support for development of
9 a Human Rights and Democracy program that includes meaningful
10 cultural and educational exchanges with North Korea; and be it
11 further

12 RESOLVED, That we call upon the United States government to
13 take a leadership role in forming an international framework
14 for resettlement of North Korean refugees both here and abroad;
15 and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
17 presented to President Barack Obama, Secretary of State John
18 Kerry, the members of the Illinois congressional delegation,
19 and the Illinois Human Rights Commission.