



HR0016

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are saddened to learn of the passing of a
4 respected former State employee, Francis N. "Frank" Kopel, on
5 November 30, 2014; and

6 WHEREAS, Francis Kopel was born on May 28, 1949 in Moline;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, Francis Kopel graduated from United Township High
9 School in 1967; he subsequently studied Political Science at
10 Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, where he earned his
11 Bachelor of Arts degree in Government in 1971 and Master of
12 Arts degree in Political Science with a concentration in
13 International Law in 1976; he later continued his formal
14 education at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri,
15 earning a Master of Arts degree in Urban Politics in 1978 and
16 completing Ph.D. coursework related to municipal finance; and

17 WHEREAS, Francis Kopel began his public service as a
18 caseworker with the Cook County Department of Public Aid in
19 Chicago in 1972; in 1979, he began working as a research
20 analyst for the United States House of Representatives'
21 Committee on House Administration in Washington, D.C.; later
22 that year, he began his long career with the Illinois

1 Department of Public Aid (now the Illinois Department of
2 Healthcare and Family Services) as an Assistant Manager of the
3 Bureau of Planning and Evaluation; and

4 WHEREAS, Over the years, Francis Kopel took on added
5 responsibility in the Department of Public Aid's Divisions of
6 Medical Programs and Finance; he was selected to be Deputy
7 Administrator of Medical Programs in 2009 and Administrator of
8 the Division of Finance in 2011; and

9 WHEREAS, Francis Kopel's tenure at the Department spanned
10 the administrations of several Governors, including Daniel
11 Walker, James Thompson, Jim Edgar, George Ryan, Rod
12 Blagojevich, and Pat Quinn, as well as many agency Directors,
13 including Jeffrey C. Miller, Carl Mankowicz, Gregory Coler,
14 Michael Taylor, Edward Duffy, Kathleen Briedert-Kustra, Susan
15 Suter, Phillip Bradley, Robert W. Wright, Linda Renee Baker,
16 Joan Walters, Theron Aslaksen, Ann Patla, Jackie Garner, A.
17 George Hovanec, Barry S. Maram, and Julie Hamos; and

18 WHEREAS, Francis Kopel assisted in the development and
19 implementation of major welfare reform initiatives, including
20 the landmark 2012 Save Medicaid Access and Resources Together
21 Act and nursing home and hospital reimbursement methodologies
22 that were critical to Illinois being able to provide services
23 efficiently and effectively to millions of children, adults,

1 seniors, and persons with disabilities; he also aided in the
2 development of provider assessment programs that have brought
3 additional billions of dollars and additional resources for the
4 State's Medicaid Program; and

5 WHEREAS, Francis Kopel was a Bureau Chief responsible for
6 reimbursement and analysis for many years; he taught and
7 mentored many employees in federal financing, local government
8 Medicaid financing, intergovernmental agreements, rate
9 methodologies, and other intricacies of the Medicaid program;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Francis Kopel will be remembered by his colleagues
12 at the Illinois Department of Healthcare & Family Services and
13 within the administrations of many Governors as an intelligent,
14 caring, skillful, and thoughtful analyst, administrator,
15 supervisor, and friend whose input was always valued; and

16 WHEREAS, Francis Kopel's colleagues report that one of his
17 greatest strengths was his ability to make sense of computer
18 systems that were used for eligibility determination and
19 benefits processing, to the extent that he could understand
20 those systems and write the computer programs that made it
21 possible for him to independently retrieve data from the
22 systems quickly and provide top agency administrators more
23 immediate access to data they needed for program and policy

1 planning; he could then pass on that knowledge and skill to
2 other employees and colleagues; and

3 WHEREAS, Francis Kopel loved a challenge to think
4 creatively and take on big problems, including a 1987 original
5 proposal for comprehensive national welfare reform; and

6 WHEREAS, Francis Kopel's creativity, ability, and
7 dedication to public service also contributed to his effective
8 consultation and collaboration with others outside of the
9 Department, including social and medical service organizations
10 and the Illinois General Assembly; and

11 WHEREAS, Upon his retirement on December 31, 2012, Francis
12 Kopel's record of public service and accomplishments were
13 recognized by Governor Pat Quinn in a special Proclamation
14 issued on December 13, 2012; and

15 WHEREAS, Francis Kopel was preceded in death by his father,
16 Francis Kopel, and his father-in-law, Ralph Voigts; and

17 WHEREAS, Francis Kopel is survived by his wife, Carolyn
18 Cochran-Kopel; his mother, Margaret (nee Adamson) Kopel; 3
19 children, Kendra (William "BJ") Jahn, Kelly (Michael) Cohlman,
20 and Jason (Laura) Cochran; 6 grandchildren, Jordy, Charles,
21 Ruth, Matthew, Kyle, and Maxwell; 3 siblings, Edward (Martina)

1 Kopel, Karen (Dan) Bystrom, and Rick Kopel; his mother-in-law,
2 Louise Voigts; his in-laws, Greg Voigts, Jeff (Karen) Voigts,
3 Sherry (Brian) Friedman, and Lisa Leonard; 13 nieces and
4 nephews, Christina (Seth) Kopel, Ryan (Debbie) Hageman, Aaron
5 (Kristen) Kopel, Ben (Nicole) Kopel, Sara Samolitis, Zelig
6 Kopel, Tiffany (Jerry) Sullivan, Brittany (Korey) Lyons,
7 Trevor (Laura) Leonard, Ryan (Alicia) Voigts, Adam Voigts, and
8 Lindsay and Alex Friedman; and his many great-nieces,
9 great-nephews, friends, neighbors, and colleagues; and

10 WHEREAS, Francis Kopel will also be remembered as a devoted
11 and kind husband who traveled the world with his beloved wife,
12 as a caring father who could answer any question, a playful and
13 loving grandfather, a wonderful son, brother, and friend, and
14 the attentive caretaker of Squeaky the cat and countless
15 backyard birds and squirrels; his presence will be felt when we
16 see an Indiana Jones hat, smell fresh coffee, tend our gardens,
17 hear a dry yet witty joke, or pass by Washington Park, where he
18 and his wife were married 25 years ago; he will be deeply
19 missed by all who were fortunate to have known and loved him;
20 therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
22 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
23 we, along with his family and friends, honor and mourn the
24 passing of Francis N. "Frank" Kopel; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
2 presented to the family of Frank Kopel as a symbol of our deep
3 appreciation of his service to the State of Illinois and our
4 sympathy for his passing.