



HR0198

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Approximately 6.5 million people in the United
3 States and 1% of the global population have an intellectual
4 disability; and

5 WHEREAS, In the 1950s and early 1960s, Eunice Kennedy
6 Shriver saw how unjustly and unfairly people with intellectual
7 disabilities were treated and saw that many children with
8 intellectual disabilities didn't even have a place to play;
9 deciding to take action, she held a summer day camp for young
10 people with intellectual disabilities in her backyard in order
11 to learn what these children could do in sports and other
12 activities and not dwell on what they could not do; and

13 WHEREAS, Throughout the 1960s, Eunice Kennedy Shriver
14 continued her pioneering work, both as the driving force behind
15 President John F. Kennedy's White House panel on people with
16 intellectual disabilities and as the director of the Joseph P.
17 Kennedy, Jr. Foundation; her vision and drive for justice
18 eventually grew into the Special Olympics movement; and

19 WHEREAS, The Special Olympics strives to create a better
20 world by fostering the acceptance and inclusion of all people;
21 through the power of sports, people with intellectual
22 disabilities discover new strengths and abilities, skills, and

1 success and find joy, confidence and fulfillment on the playing
2 field and in life; and

3 WHEREAS, The Special Olympics hosts a wide range of
4 training sessions, competitions, health screenings, and
5 fund-raising events for those with intellectual disabilities;
6 the organization also creates opportunities for families,
7 community members, local leaders, businesses, law enforcement,
8 celebrities, dignitaries, and others to band together to change
9 attitudes and support athletes; and

10 WHEREAS, Anne McGlone Burke, then a Chicago Park District
11 instructor at West Pullman Park, received support from Mayor
12 Richard J. Daley to pursue her vision to organize an event
13 showcasing the abilities of her athletes; and

14 WHEREAS, On July 19-20, 1968, the first International
15 Special Olympics Summer Games were held at Soldier Field in
16 Chicago; a thousand people with intellectual disabilities from
17 26 U.S. states and Canada competed in track and field and
18 swimming; and

19 WHEREAS, The Special Olympics mission of empowering those
20 with intellectual disabilities through sport remains as vital
21 today as it did when the movement was founded; the athletes,
22 administration, and countless volunteers of the Special

1 Olympics are worthy of the greatest respect; therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
3 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
4 designate July of 2015 as Special Olympics Month in the State
5 of Illinois in honor of this great organization and its goals;
6 and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
8 presented to the Special Olympics as a symbol of our esteem and
9 respect.