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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives wish to congratulate the Kane County Cougars on 25 years of playing in Geneva; and

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WHEREAS, The Kane County Cougars are a Class A minor league baseball team, playing in the Midwest League; their home games are played in Geneva, approximately 35 miles west of Chicago; and

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WHEREAS, The Midwest League came to Kane County in 1991 after a franchise that was previously based in Decatur (1952-74) and Wausau, Wisconsin (1975-90) relocated; since moving to Kane County, the team has been known as the Cougars; they were affiliated with the Baltimore Orioles in 1991 and 1992, the Florida Marlins from 1993 to 2002, the Oakland Athletics from 2003 to 2010, the Kansas City Royals for the 2011 and 2012 seasons, and the Chicago Cubs for the 2013 and 2014 seasons; for the 2015 season, they joined the Arizona Diamondbacks organization; and

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WHEREAS, As a Marlins farm team, some of the key contributors to the 2003 World Series championship team played for the Cougars on their way to the big leagues; 2003 World Series MVP Josh Beckett played for the Cougars in 2000 and

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1 Dontrelle Willis had the league's best winning percentage and
2 earned run average in 2002; and

3 WHEREAS, The Cougars play their home games at Fifth Third
4 Bank Ballpark, built in 1991; the franchise attendance record
5 of 523,222 was set in 2001 and they are perennially among the
6 league leaders in attendance; on July 20, 2013, the Cougars
7 became the first Class A team to attract 10 million fans; in
8 2015, the Cougars finished in the top 30 across all Minor
9 League Baseball clubs in terms of attendance and their overall
10 attendance of 408,449 fans was second-best in the 16-team
11 Midwest League; Nancy Faust, after 40 years with the Chicago
12 White Sox, is the stadium organist for selected home games; and

13 WHEREAS, In addition to welcoming more than 400,000 fans
14 during the organization's 25th anniversary season, this year's
15 Cougars team went 84 and 54 (third-best record in franchise
16 history) while winning the Western Division second half
17 championship; and

18 WHEREAS, The 2015 season was the first year of the
19 Cougars's affiliation with the Arizona Diamondbacks; they were
20 led by former Major League Baseball player and first-year
21 manager Mark Grudzielanek; more than 130 former Cougars have
22 reached the Major Leagues; numerous former Cougars are
23 currently involved in the Major League Baseball postseason,

1 including 2014 Cougar Kyle Schwarber, who has helped lead the
2 Chicago Cubs to the National League Championship Series;
3 therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
5 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
6 congratulate the Kane County Cougars on 25 years of playing in
7 Geneva and we wish them many more successful years; and be it
8 further

9 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
10 presented to the Kane County Cougars organization as an
11 expression of our esteem and respect.