

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to recognize milestone events in the
4 lives of the citizens of the State of Illinois; and

5 WHEREAS, It has come to our attention that Dr. George
6 Rabb is retiring from his duties as Director of the
7 Brookfield Zoo after 27 years as Director and an overall
8 47-year career affiliation with Brookfield Zoo; and

9 WHEREAS, George B. Rabb has served as Brookfield Zoo's
10 director and president of the Chicago Zoological Society
11 since 1976; on local, national, and international levels, Dr.
12 Rabb directed Brookfield Zoo's pursuit of its mission
13 purpose: to help people develop a sustainable and harmonious
14 relationship with nature; and

15 WHEREAS, To achieve this goal, Brookfield Zoo provides
16 for the recreation and education of people, the conservation
17 of wildlife, and the discovery of biological knowledge;
18 Brookfield Zoo is envisioned as a conservation center, a
19 concept Dr. Rabb has championed for zoos everywhere through
20 the World Zoo Conservation Strategy and in other ways; and

21 WHEREAS, Dr. Rabb received both master's and doctoral
22 degrees from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and his
23 bachelor's degree from the College of Charleston, South
24 Carolina; he also has an honorary degree of doctor of humane
25 letters from the College of Charleston; and

26 WHEREAS, Dr. Rabb joined Brookfield Zoo in 1956 as a
27 curator of research, a unique position in American zoos at
28 that time; he created the zoo's Education Department and has
29 been instrumental in expanding the use of naturalistic
30 exhibits pioneered by Brookfield Zoo's founders to provide
31 visitors with environmental immersion experiences throughout

1 the zoo; during his directorial tenure, Tropic World, Seven
2 Seas Panorama, Fragile Kingdom, Habitat Africa-The Swamp,
3 Habitat Africa-The Savanna, Habitat Africa-The Forest, the
4 Living Coast, and Salt Creek Wilderness have been built on
5 this basis; in addition, other important facilities developed
6 during this time include meeting classrooms and offices at
7 the Discovery Center, a new animal hospital, and the Rice
8 conservation biology center; and

9 WHEREAS, Brookfield Zoo's most recent undertaking, the
10 Hamill Family Play Zoo, is an expression of Dr. Rabb's vision
11 of the zoo as a conservation center by helping children
12 develop a caring relationship with the natural world; under
13 his leadership, the Chicago Zoological Society created a
14 department of Conservation Biology to pursue
15 conservation-related research and field projects; the
16 Society's primary extramural conservation effort has been in
17 developing community participation in conservation of the
18 million hectare Bookmark Biosphere Reserve in Australia;
19 other long-term field projects include studies of the ecology
20 and behavior of baboons in Amboseli National Park, Kenya, and
21 behavioral research on wild dolphins in Sarasota Bay,
22 Florida, and western Australia; Brookfield Zoo has also been
23 a pioneer in the field of conservation genetics at both the
24 populations and molecular levels; and

25 WHEREAS, Dr. Rabb has affiliations with conservation
26 organizations worldwide and is a respected spokesman on
27 wildlife conservation issues, most notably, from 1990 to 1996
28 he served as chairman of the Species Survival Commission, one
29 of six commissions of IUCN-the World Conservation Union,
30 which is headquartered in Switzerland; during his tenure as
31 chairman, numerous strategies and conservation Action Plans
32 were initiated, including the Declining Amphibian Populations
33 Task Force, which bear witness to Dr. Rabb' skills in linking

1 individuals and institutions worldwide in their efforts to
2 conserve biodiversity; in recognition of his continuing role
3 as a mentor for young scientists and other colleagues, IUCN
4 established a graduate student internship program named in
5 his honor; and

6 WHEREAS, In 1973, Dr. Rabb organized the first session of
7 the American Zoo and Aquarium Association on research in
8 zoos; from that meeting arose ISIS-the International Species
9 Information System, whose advisory board and then independent
10 board he chaired from 1974 until 1992; he served as species
11 coordinator of the Okapi Species Survival Plan for the
12 American Zoo and Aquarium Association from 1989 to 2002; and

13 WHEREAS, Locally, Dr. Rabb serves as vice-chair of the
14 Chicago Council on Biodiversity and the managing group of
15 Chicago Wilderness, a multi-organizational effort to maintain
16 the exceptional biological diversity of the metropolitan
17 region; he also serves as president of Chicago Wilderness
18 Magazine Board and has long been a member of the University
19 of Chicago's Committee on Evolutionary Biology, a research
20 associate of the Field Museum, and he serves as board chair
21 of the Illinois State Museum; and

22 WHEREAS, Dr. Rabb is a published authority on the
23 behavior of mammals, reptiles, and amphibians, notably on
24 social behavior of a captive wolf pack, behavioral
25 development in Okapi, and breeding behavior of pipid frogs;
26 his other studies have ranged from the evolutionary
27 relationships of viperid snakes to diabetes in tree shrews;
28 and

29 WHEREAS, Dr. Rabb's work for conservation has been
30 recognized with an Honorary Membership from IUCN; the Heini
31 Hediger Award from IUDZG-the World Zoo Organization; the
32 Peter Scott Award from the Species Survival Commission; the

1 R. Marlin Perkins Award from the American Zoo and Aquarium
2 Association; the Silver Medal of the Royal Zoological Society
3 of London; the Conservation Medal from the Zoological Society
4 of San Diego; and the Distinguished Achievement Award from
5 the Society for Conservation Biology; therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
7 NINETY-SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
8 we congratulate Dr. George Rabb for his dedication, service,
9 and enormous contribution as Director of Brookfield Zoo and
10 we wish him well in all of his future endeavors; and be it
11 further

12 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
13 presented to Dr. George Rabb as an expression of our esteem.