



HJ0043

LRB104 14799 LAW 27942 r

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois General Assembly wish
3 to congratulate the Nestle USA plant in the Village of Morton
4 on the occasion of its 100th anniversary; and

5 WHEREAS, Nestle USA's roots in Morton were established in
6 1835; at that time, Elijah Dickinson, a veteran of the War of
7 1812 who originated from Spotsylvania County, Virginia,
8 brought pumpkin seeds with him when he moved with his family
9 from Kentucky to Eureka, Illinois, which was then called
10 Walnut Grove; and

11 WHEREAS, More than six decades later, the Dickinson
12 brothers purchased their first vegetable cannery in the City
13 of Eureka in 1898 and later opened a second plant in the City
14 of Washington in 1909, processing corn, peas, string beans,
15 and pumpkins; and

16 WHEREAS, The Dickinson Canning Company began operations in
17 Morton in 1925, with its third plant for processing corn; by
18 the end of the 1920s, the plant was responsible for producing
19 almost 2,000,000 cans of corn while employing 225 people,
20 mainly women, to pack inventory; and

21 WHEREAS, Libby, McNeill & Libby, commonly referred to as

1 Libby's, was an American company that switched from canning
2 meats to canning vegetables in 1905 and purchased the Morton,
3 Eureka, and Washington plants in 1929; in the process, the
4 company gained contracts with local farmers to grow a cultivar
5 of pumpkins; and

6 WHEREAS, During World War II, Libby's used German
7 prisoners of war to work in the plants due to the labor
8 shortage; and

9 WHEREAS, After the Eureka and Washington plants closed,
10 the Morton plant expanded in 1960, packing corn, beans, and
11 pumpkins; around this time, pumpkins began playing a crucial
12 role in the Village of Morton, leading to the creation of the
13 Morton Pumpkin Festival; and

14 WHEREAS, The first annual Morton Pumpkin Festival was
15 organized by Bob Humprey and the Morton Chamber of Commerce in
16 1967, with nearly 12,000 festivalgoers in attendance and 7,000
17 pumpkin pies distributed; at the inaugural festival, Connie
18 Wunder was named festival queen, and prizes were awarded to
19 first-grader Lisa Kahler for winning the pumpkin-decorating
20 contest, the Ben Franklin Store for placing first in the
21 commercial class floats category, and the Restmor Home for
22 taking first in the non-commercial class floats category; and

1 WHEREAS, After Libby's was acquired by Nestle in 1971, the
2 Morton plant began to exclusively can pumpkins the following
3 year; and

4 WHEREAS, The Morton plant, otherwise known as the Nestle
5 USA plant, has overcome adversity over the last century, such
6 as when it faced the exceptionally rainy growing season of
7 2009, which led to a canned pumpkin shortage nationwide; and

8 WHEREAS, The Morton plant has made profound contributions
9 to the Village of Morton over its 100-year history, from
10 producing over 85% of the world's canned pumpkins locally to
11 inspiring community events, such as the Morton Pumpkin
12 Festival; and

13 WHEREAS, Today, the Village of Morton is widely known as
14 the Pumpkin Capital of the World, a nickname first bestowed on
15 the village by then-Governor James R. Thompson in 1978;
16 therefore, be it

17 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
18 HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
19 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we congratulate the Nestle USA
20 plant in Morton on achieving its 100th anniversary, and we
21 thank the plant for its continued contributions to the Morton
22 community; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
2 presented to Nestle USA in Morton and the Village of Morton as
3 a symbol of our esteem and respect.