



HR0185

LRB104 12043 MST 22138 r

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of  
3 Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of former  
4 Illinois State Rep. Ronald A. "Ron" Wait, who passed away on  
5 December 30, 2024; and

6 WHEREAS, Rep. Wait, a native of Boone County, was born in  
7 Belvidere on April 15, 1944, the son of Grace Smith Wait and  
8 Cecil Wait; he grew up in Belvidere, where his father was the  
9 manager of Wait Farms; the future lawmaker was a member of one  
10 of the Illinois farm families that was helping to feed the  
11 world during the hungry time of World War II and the years of  
12 postwar austerity; and

13 WHEREAS, Rep. Wait earned a college degree at Drake  
14 University, majoring in accounting; returning to Boone County  
15 with a car, he drove tirelessly to Northern Illinois  
16 University in DeKalb, where he earned a Master of Science in  
17 Education and a Master of Business Administration; and

18 WHEREAS, Rep. Wait was a teacher and sports enthusiast and  
19 served for four years as a track coach and basketball coach at  
20 Belvidere High School; and

21 WHEREAS, Rep. Wait resumed his ties with Drake University,

1 earning admission to their law school and earning a Juris  
2 Doctor; and

3 WHEREAS, Rep. Wait was also co-managing and managing his  
4 family's Boone County farm throughout this period as a  
5 student, accountant, teacher, and lawyer; and

6 WHEREAS, Rep. Wait's home in Boone County was drawn into  
7 the new Illinois House 64th Representative District in 1982 as  
8 the result of redistricting after the 1980 census and the  
9 creation of the new system of single-member districts; the new  
10 district was physically centered on Boone County, with large  
11 slices of McHenry and Winnebago County; and

12 WHEREAS, Rep. Wait's neighbors nominated him in the March  
13 1982 primary election as the Republican candidate for the  
14 November 1982 general election; the new district was staunchly  
15 Republican, and he was elected by a margin of more than 8,000  
16 votes; and

17 WHEREAS, Rep. Wait, with his farm background, was quickly  
18 appointed to what was then the House Agriculture Committee,  
19 and in only his second term, in 1985-86 (84th General  
20 Assembly), he became the House Republican spokesperson on the  
21 committee; and

1       WHEREAS, Rep. Wait was the Republican spokesperson for  
2       Illinois farmers and their work for eight years until 1993;  
3       during this time, he was joined in life by his beloved wife,  
4       Jody Wait, and her son, Danny Phillips; and

5       WHEREAS, Rep. Wait briefly left office after the November  
6       1992 election but remained in politics; he challenged the  
7       brief Democratic office-holder from what had become the 68th  
8       Representative District, Rep. Barbara Giolitto, to a rematch  
9       in November 1994, defeated her, and was elected to the 89th  
10      General Assembly; and

11      WHEREAS, Rep. Wait became a committee chairperson with the  
12      Republican majority of the 89th General Assembly; he became  
13      chair of the House Committee on Transportation and Motor  
14      Vehicles; in January 1997, he became the minority spokesperson  
15      of the same Committee, a post he would retain for 12 years; and

16      WHEREAS, Rep. Wait chose to move on from the Illinois  
17      House of Representatives in spring 2010; although his friends  
18      put in his name for a judgeship on the 17th Circuit Court of  
19      Illinois, the voters selected another candidate, and he opted  
20      to end his career in active politics; and

21      WHEREAS, Rep. Wait won renewed praise from his neighbors  
22      for his continuing active participation in the local and

1 community affairs of Belvidere after returning to private life  
2 in Boone County in spring 2011; these issues grew more  
3 challenging in the 2010s in conjunction with the overall  
4 economic status of Illinois as a place to invest and create  
5 jobs; and

6 WHEREAS, Rep. Wait served in a number of leadership  
7 positions, including with the Highland Hospital, the Boone  
8 County Board, the Boone County Housing Authority Board, the  
9 University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Board, and the  
10 Boone County Farm Bureau; and

11 WHEREAS, Rep. Wait was active with a number of community  
12 organizations, including the First United Methodist Church of  
13 Belvidere, the United Way, Rosecrance, the Boone County Bar  
14 Association, the Cosmopolitan Club of Belvidere, the Grange,  
15 the Moose Club, the Belvidere YMCA, and the Belvidere Area  
16 Chamber of Commerce; in addition, he was instrumental in  
17 finding funding for the Belvidere Community Building Project;  
18 and

19 WHEREAS, Rep. Wait was honored in October 2024 by the  
20 Belvidere Chamber of Commerce with the honorary status of a  
21 Doctor of Civic Betterment in homage to his life of service to  
22 Boone County and its people; therefore, be it

1       RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
2       HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
3       we mourn the passing of former Illinois State Rep. Ronald A.  
4       "Ron" Wait and extend our sincere condolences to his family,  
5       friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it further

6       RESOLVED, That we recognize the life, community service,  
7       and long legislative service of Rep. Wait; and be it further

8       RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
9       presented to Rep. Wait's two surviving brothers and  
10      sisters-in-law, Roger and Nancy Wait and Dean and Karen Wait,  
11      as a symbol of our deepest sympathy.