



HR0282

LRB104 13249 LAW 25437 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to congratulate Original Kaskaskia Area
4 Wilderness (OKAW), Inc. on the occasion of its 30th
5 anniversary; and

6 WHEREAS, OKAW, a landowners' association in southwest
7 Illinois, was formed as a forum for community discussion of
8 landowner issues and a grass-roots planning commission in
9 1995, becoming a 501(c)(3) private land trust in partnership
10 with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Ecosystems
11 Program of Conservation 2000 (IDNR C2000), which provides
12 financial incentives for landowners to sign conservation
13 easements with the association; and

14 WHEREAS, OKAW's purpose is to develop, enhance, and
15 protect the natural resources in the Mid-Kaskaskia River
16 watershed, an important ecosystem whose natural resources
17 include five of the State's largest forest tracts, upland post
18 oak flatwoods, agricultural lands, and coal and oil deposits,
19 due to the area exhibiting apparent herbicide vapor-drift
20 damage and severe bank erosion, among other issues, in recent
21 years; and

22 WHEREAS, The Mid-Kaskaskia River watershed's unchannelized

1 floodplain section shelters the breeding grounds and natural
2 habitats of many species, including neotropical warblers, a
3 number of duck species, wild turkey, pileated woodpeckers,
4 otters, bobcats, coyotes, beavers, and deer; it is also home
5 to high-value white oak and walnut timber and showy native
6 wildflowers and is part of an area known for its production of
7 wheat, soybean, corn, pumpkin, and orchard products; and

8 WHEREAS, OKAW has grown to approximately 100 members and,
9 over the years, has offered conservation easements, nest-box
10 workshops, wood walks, photography contests, classroom
11 conservation videos, a reforestation program, vernal pool
12 plans, a Kaskaskia River Corridor Stewardship Plan, and a
13 yearly newsletter; the association has also worked with a
14 number of entities, including the Kaskaskia Watershed
15 Association and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; and

16 WHEREAS, OKAW is currently led by President Doane
17 Borrenpohl, who continues to work with the association's first
18 president, Larry Hasheider; the association has received
19 additional support from Resource Conservation and Development
20 (RC&D) coordinator Ed Weilbacher, area landowner Glen Schuetz,
21 IDNR wildlife biologist Martin Kemper, and State
22 Representative Charlie Meier; and

23 WHEREAS, OKAW members will celebrate its 30th anniversary

1 at Okawville Community Club on April 29, 2025; therefore, be
2 it

3 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
4 HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
5 we congratulate Original Kaskaskia Area Wilderness (OKAW),
6 Inc. on its 30th anniversary, and we acknowledge its members'
7 efforts in the natural resource conservation of the Kaskaskia
8 River watershed; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
10 presented to OKAW, Inc. as an expression of our esteem and
11 respect.