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HOUSE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives wish to congratulate the Channel Cat on the occasion of its 30th anniversary; and

WHEREAS, In 1994, Executive Director Kathy Wine of River Action, a local nonprofit group dedicated to fostering environmental, economic, and cultural vitality of the Mississippi River and its riverfront in the Quad Cities region, received a grant from the Riverboat Development Authority to conduct a feasibility study of a water taxi on the Mississippi River; and

WHEREAS, A committee was formed that included River Action, city planners from Davenport and Bettendorf, Iowa and Moline, Illinois, the local transit authority MetroLINK, a riverboat captain, a retired U.S. Coast Guard employee, and a local non-gaming riverboat company, the Celebration Belle; and

WHEREAS, In lieu of moving forward with a planning study, the committee proactively purchased an aluminum pontoon boat with limited seating and began planning for service on the Mississippi River, leading to the launch of a single pontoon boat on the weekend of July 4, 1995; and

1 WHEREAS, In 1998, under the direction of CEO Jeff Nelson
2 of MetroLINK, the local transit authority assumed operation of
3 the Channel Cat as a public transit, passenger ferryboat
4 option for the region; and

5 WHEREAS, Since that time, MetroLINK has received Federal
6 Highway Administration and Federal Transportation
7 Administration discretionary grant awards, resulting in the
8 purchase of three open air, 47-foot, 24-net-ton military
9 transport barges that are each powered by two 250-horsepower
10 John Deere engines using B20 biodiesel fuel, are fully ADA
11 accessible, and possess an aluminum hull, a deck, a seating
12 bench for 49 passengers, and room for seven bicycles;
13 additional grant awards also resulted in the construction of
14 four new and improved docks, two being located in Moline and
15 one each in Davenport and East Moline, which provided wider
16 passenger queue areas, ADA accessibility, signage, and
17 improved pedestrian and bicycle access to the riverfront, as
18 well as the future addition of two battery electric
19 ferryboats; and

20 WHEREAS, MetroLINK has also expanded the Channel Cat
21 passenger ferryboat service, increased ridership, and provided
22 public access to the wildlife, history, culture, and geology
23 of the Mississippi River and the Quad Cities; and

1 WHEREAS, MetroLINK and the Channel Cat have received the
2 Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce Multi-Modal Award, the River
3 Action Eddy Award, and various community recognitions; and

4 WHEREAS, The Channel Cat passenger ferryboat service has
5 had a tremendous impact on the Quad Cities economy, providing
6 over 1,000,000 rides to date while offering riders an
7 alternative mode of transportation to cross the Mississippi
8 River and access to two states, three downtowns, and
9 riverfront pedestrian and bicycling trails; therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
11 HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
12 we congratulate the Channel Cat on its 30th anniversary in
13 providing critical passenger ferryboat service to the Quad
14 Cities, and we acknowledge Executive Director Kathy Wine of
15 River Action and CEO/Managing Director Jeff Nelson of
16 MetroLINK for their leadership, innovation, and commitment to
17 the Mississippi River and the Quad Cities riverfronts; and be
18 it further

19 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
20 presented to Executive Director Kathy Wine of River Action and
21 CEO/Managing Director Jeff Nelson of MetroLINK as an
22 expression of our esteem and respect.