



HR0640

LRB104 20477 RMO 33947 r

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are pleased to recognize those individuals and
4 organizations that demonstrate an unwavering commitment to the
5 revitalization of Illinois communities and the empowerment of
6 our youth; and

7 WHEREAS, Southside Blooms, a project of the nonprofit
8 Chicago Eco House, was founded by Quilen and Hannah Blackwell
9 with a vision to bring hope, healing, and economic opportunity
10 to neighborhoods on the South and West Sides of Chicago; and

11 WHEREAS, Southside Blooms has pioneered a "farm-to-vase"
12 model that transforms formerly abandoned and vacant city lots
13 in Englewood, Woodlawn, Washington Park, Pilsen, and West
14 Garfield Park into thriving, solar-powered, pesticide-free
15 flower farms; and

16 WHEREAS, Southside Blooms is an innovative social
17 enterprise that provides critical workforce development and
18 jobs for at-risk youth ages 16 to 24, offering a "pipeline for
19 youth" that includes partnerships with Cook County Juvenile
20 Probation to help formerly incarcerated young people
21 reintegrate into society through merit-based employment; and

1 WHEREAS, Southside Blooms equips young leaders with
2 essential life and professional skills, including conflict
3 resolution, timeliness, and teamwork, while paying a living
4 wage and providing a pathway to management roles; and

5 WHEREAS, Southside Blooms serves as a model of
6 environmental stewardship by utilizing regenerative farming
7 practices, avoiding floral foam, composting waste, and using
8 compostable packaging to serve the \$35 billion U.S. floral
9 industry with local, sustainable alternatives; and

10 WHEREAS, On June 30, 2021, Southside Blooms celebrated the
11 opening of its first stand-alone brick-and-mortar shop at 6250
12 South Morgan Street in Englewood, marking a milestone in the
13 neighborhood's commercial revitalization; and

14 WHEREAS, The work of Southside Blooms has earned national
15 acclaim, culminating in Quilen Blackwell being named the 2025
16 CNN Hero of the Year, a distinction that highlights the
17 transformative power of urban agriculture and the resilience
18 of Chicago's youth; therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
20 HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
21 we commend Quilen Blackwell, Hannah Blackwell, and the entire
22 team at Southside Blooms for their dedication to social

1 impact, economic development, and environmental
2 sustainability; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That we celebrate the success of the youth who
4 have blossomed through this program and wish the employees of
5 Southside Blooms continued success as they expand their
6 mission to sow seeds of change across the State of Illinois and
7 the nation; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
9 presented to Quilen and Hannah Blackwell of Southside Blooms
10 as a symbol of our respect and esteem.