



HR0849

LRB104 21561 LAW 36972 r

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, This year, July 4, 2026, marks the 250th
3 anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence,
4 a foundational document that boldly proclaimed to the world
5 the "self-evident" truths that all people are created equal
6 and endowed with unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the
7 pursuit of happiness; and

8 WHEREAS, At the time of the nation's founding, these
9 revolutionary ideals were far from reality for the vast
10 majority of people living on this continent, as the benefits
11 of liberty were restricted by race, gender, class, and creed,
12 and the institution of chattel slavery stood in direct
13 contradiction to the spirit of the Declaration of
14 Independence; and

15 WHEREAS, The American constitutional system has been
16 repeatedly challenged by internal strife, systemic inequality,
17 and the failure to live up to its own creed, yet it has proven
18 resilient through the tireless efforts of grassroots social
19 movements that have dared to hold the nation accountable to
20 its founding promises; and

21 WHEREAS, The United States of America, though an imperfect
22 model, represents a global spirit of progress, demonstrating

1 to the world that a diverse people can engage in the difficult,
2 ongoing work of self-governance and the pursuit of a more
3 equitable society for all of humanity; and

4 WHEREAS, Indigenous and Native Americans have persisted in
5 the face of displacement and erasure, asserting their
6 sovereignty and reminding the nation of its obligations to
7 justice, land stewardship, and the preservation of diverse
8 cultures that predated the republic; and

9 WHEREAS, The abolitionist movement, led by figures such as
10 Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman and joined by Illinois'
11 own "Great Emancipator" Abraham Lincoln, courageously fought
12 to dismantle the scourge of slavery, asserting that the values
13 of the Declaration of Independence could never be realized in
14 a house divided; and

15 WHEREAS, African Americans, through centuries of struggle
16 from Reconstruction to the modern Civil Rights Movement, have
17 acted as the conscience of the nation, demanding that the
18 protections of the United States Constitution be applied
19 equally to all, and, in doing so, have strengthened the
20 democracy for every citizen; and

21 WHEREAS, Voting rights advocates have marched, organized,
22 and suffered to ensure that the "consent of the governed" is

1 not a hollow phrase but a lived reality, resulting in the
2 expansion of the franchise through the 15th, 19th, and 26th
3 Amendments and the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1965; and

4 WHEREAS, Generations of women, from the suffragists at
5 Seneca Falls to the leaders of the modern feminist movement,
6 have challenged the patriarchal structures of the founding era
7 to secure legal equality, bodily autonomy, and a seat at every
8 table of power; and

9 WHEREAS, The United States has long served as a beacon of
10 hope and a welcoming nation for millions of immigrants seeking
11 a better life, whose courage to leave their homelands and
12 contribute to our shared prosperity has fundamentally shaped
13 the American character and reinforced our commitment to the
14 values of the Declaration of Independence; and

15 WHEREAS, Latinos in America have enriched our national
16 fabric through their labor, culture, and advocacy for labor
17 rights and immigration reform, embodying the immigrant spirit
18 that is central to the American story; and

19 WHEREAS, Asian Americans have overcome a history of
20 exclusion and internment to contribute profoundly to the
21 nation's economic and cultural prosperity, while continually
22 advocating for a more inclusive definition of what it means to

1 be American; and

2 WHEREAS, LGBTQ people in America have led a modern
3 revolution for dignity and equality, from the streets of
4 Stonewall to the halls of the Supreme Court, proving that the
5 pursuit of happiness includes the right to live and love
6 authentically; and

7 WHEREAS, Americans with disabilities, both visible and
8 invisible, have relentlessly advocated for the recognition of
9 their inherent dignity and right to full participation in
10 society, leading to transformative shifts in accessibility,
11 education, and employment, most notably through the passage of
12 the Americans with Disabilities Act, and reminding the nation
13 that the pursuit of happiness must be accessible to every
14 individual, regardless of physical or cognitive ability; and

15 WHEREAS, This semiquincentennial serves not only as a
16 celebration of the past but as a rededication to the ongoing
17 work of "forming a more perfect Union", acknowledging that our
18 progress has been won through struggle and that our future
19 depends on our shared commitment to expanding the circle of
20 opportunity and justice; therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
22 HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that

1 we commemorate the 250th anniversary of the United States of
2 America and the Declaration of Independence; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That we honor the countless activists and
4 everyday citizens who have pushed this nation closer to its
5 ideals; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That we express our commitment to a future that
7 reflects the full diversity and promise of the American
8 people; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
10 delivered to the Illinois America 250 Commission and the U.S.
11 Semiquincentennial Commission.