



HR0953

LRB104 22126 LAW 38315 r

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to congratulate the citizens of Rockford
4 and Ferentino, Italy on the occasion of the 20th anniversary
5 of their sister city partnership; and

6 WHEREAS, Rockford has a substantial and vibrant Italian
7 American population that celebrates its ancestral heritage,
8 including many families and individuals who trace their
9 ancestral roots to Ferentino, an ancient, pre-Roman era hill
10 town southeast of Rome; these families and their descendants
11 have grown to become an integral and cherished part of the
12 Rockford community, enriching its cultural, civic, and social
13 fabric for generations; and

14 WHEREAS, Since the late 1800s, thousands of immigrants
15 made the journey from Ferentino to Rockford, building homes,
16 businesses, churches, and institutions that have shaped the
17 identity of the city; their descendants, now numbering in the
18 thousands, remain a vibrant and active part of the Rockford
19 community, preserving Italian traditions while contributing to
20 the greater civic and cultural life of the region; and

21 WHEREAS, Immigrants to Rockford from Ferentino founded the
22 Society of Saint Ambrogio Martyr Mutual Benefit Society (Saint

1 Ambrogio Society) in 1918, which is still in active operation
2 today, standing as a testament to the enduring bonds between
3 the two communities and the dedication of Ferentino-descended
4 families to preserving their shared heritage; and

5 WHEREAS, Efforts to establish an Italian sister city to
6 Rockford began in 2005 through family ties in both Rockford
7 and Ferentino, leading to robust community efforts in both
8 cities to formalize the lasting connections that have linked
9 the people of Rockford and Ferentino for over a century; and

10 WHEREAS, The Italian Sister City Committee was formed in
11 Rockford in 2005 to facilitate the ongoing communication
12 between citizens and officials from Rockford and Ferentino to
13 promote and support a sister city agreement between the two
14 cities; and

15 WHEREAS, A delegation of nine public officials from the
16 Ferentino City Council and the Pro Loco Association visited
17 Rockford for a week in May 2006, where they took part in
18 several official meetings and activities that culminated in
19 the signing of a sister city agreement by Mayor Larry
20 Morrissey of Rockford and Mayor Piergianni Fiorletta of
21 Ferentino at Rockford City Hall on May 15, 2006; and

22 WHEREAS, A volunteer-based entity, the Rockford Italian

1 Sister Cities Association (RISCA), has organized and sponsored
2 activities over the past two decades in support of this
3 partnership, which have included international visitor
4 exchanges, student pen pal programs, peace pole installations,
5 gift exchanges, creation of the Italian Sister City garden and
6 a plaque at Rockford's Keeling-Puri Peace Plaza, participation
7 in the Rockford Sister Cities Advisory Commission, and
8 cultural displays at the Rockford and Ferentino city halls and
9 at Rockford's Festa Italiana, Midway Village Museum, Discovery
10 Center Museum, Public Library, and Ethnic Heritage Museum; and

11 WHEREAS, The 20th anniversary of this historic partnership
12 is a milestone that reflects 20 years of friendship, cultural
13 exchange, and mutual respect between two communities bound by
14 shared history, shared values, and the enduring spirit of
15 their people, both in Italy and in Illinois; and

16 WHEREAS, The 20th anniversary of this historic event will
17 be recognized in Rockford and in Ferentino and be celebrated
18 by RISCA's hosting of commemorative activities; therefore, be
19 it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
21 HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
22 we congratulate the citizens of Rockford and Ferentino, Italy
23 on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of their sister city

1 partnership in recognition of the thousands of
2 Ferentino-descended individuals who have made and continue to
3 make Rockford a richer, stronger, and more vibrant community;
4 and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That we commend the Saint Ambrogio Society,
6 Rockford's other Italian social clubs, and all of the many
7 organizations, businesses, and countless individuals and
8 elected officials, here and abroad, that have worked to
9 sustain the steadfast bonds between Rockford and Ferentino for
10 over a century; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
12 presented to the cities of Rockford and Ferentino and
13 representatives of the Rockford Italian Sister Cities Alliance
14 (RISCA) as an expression of our esteem and respect.