



SR0068

LRB104 03332 LAW 13354 r

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site provides a historic, interactive interpretation of the reconstructed 1830s village where Abraham Lincoln once lived, which at one time, when it was a premier site, hosted more than 400,000 visitors from around the world per year; and

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WHEREAS, Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site has experienced extensive deterioration of the reconstructed log homes, roofs, buildings, foundations, chimneys, fences, steps, footbridge, flatboat, cemetery, and iconic Grist Mill; and

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WHEREAS, Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site attracts students on field trips, volunteers, campers, hikers, canoeing and kayaking enthusiasts, college interns, cyclists, children partaking in Pioneer Life Summer Day Camps, historians, visitors from around the world, and descendants of those who lived, worked, and are buried there; and

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WHEREAS, Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site serves as a living history museum, with volunteer interpreters in the homes, and features concessions, a gift shop, campgrounds, exercise areas, and trails; the site also hosts a number of events, including the Traditional Music Festival, Theatre in the Park, Summer Frolic, the Independence Day Celebration,

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1 which features a reading of the Declaration of Independence,  
2 the Fall Festival, the popular annual Fall Candlelight Walk,  
3 Boy Scouts of America (BSA) jamborees, and the BSA Abraham  
4 Lincoln Pilgrimage, where scouts hike while retracing  
5 Lincoln's footsteps to Springfield; and

6 WHEREAS, Over the past 40 years, the New Salem Lincoln  
7 League has invested more than a million dollars in programs  
8 and improvements to Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site,  
9 including introducing new cultural and educational programs in  
10 the village and outdoor theater, purchasing traditional wood  
11 shingles to replace the village structures' roofs and treated  
12 wood to replace cabin porches and steps, paying for the site's  
13 iconic statues to be professionally cleaned, treated, and  
14 restored, financing new LED lighting to save the site  
15 thousands of dollars, funding the veterinary care and  
16 transportation for medical care of the site's animals, and  
17 acquiring a horse, a horse trailer, feed, and hay; the league  
18 has also made a number of enhancements to the Visitor Center  
19 and its parking lot, including the production of an  
20 orientation video and the addition of a new state-of-the art  
21 system to replace the center's aging audiovisual equipment;  
22 and

23 WHEREAS, The New Salem Lincoln League relies on the work  
24 and dedication of volunteers to make Lincoln's New Salem State

1 Historic Site a memorable experience for visitors, and in  
2 turn, provides supplies and materials for volunteer efforts,  
3 such as clothing, materials for demonstrations, candles for  
4 the annual candlelight tour, and meals for all volunteers and  
5 staff during those tours; the league has also worked with  
6 Theatre In the Park, which attracts over 10,000 visitors a  
7 year, funding new seating and a new sound board, and it  
8 partners with the Illinois College Explorer program to fund up  
9 to six college interns each summer; and

10 WHEREAS, For Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site to  
11 continue, it is essential that the State of Illinois honors  
12 its commitment to preserve and maintain the site, ensuring its  
13 existence for future generations as a living history museum  
14 and as an opportunity to learn about Abraham Lincoln's  
15 transformative early years; therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL  
17 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we support the  
18 creation of a New Salem Preservation Commission to monitor and  
19 recommend repairs and maintenance for Lincoln's New Salem  
20 State Historic Site, including structures, signage, statues,  
21 overall condition of the grounds, and accessibility, and to  
22 make recommendations for the volunteer coordination efforts,  
23 including interactions and communications with current and  
24 potential volunteers, as well as guidelines for volunteer

1 eligibility and retention; and be it further

2       RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
3 delivered to Governor JB Pritzker, the Illinois Department of  
4 Natural Resources, and the New Salem Lincoln League.