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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives wish to recognize the work and accomplishments of Tyehimba Jess; and

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WHEREAS, Tyehimba Jess grew up in Detroit, Michigan and started writing poetry at the age of 16; when he was 18, he won second prize for poetry at an NAACP academic competition; he enrolled in the University of Chicago to study Public Policy; however, when taking classes with poet and scholar Sterling Plumpp, who became his mentor, he realized his real passion was for poetry; he graduated from the University of Chicago in 1991 with a bachelor's degree in public policy; he earned his Master of Fine Arts from New York University in 2004; and

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WHEREAS, Tyehimba Jess is the author of two books of poetry, *Leadbelly* and *Olio*; his inspiration for writing stems from his desire to convey historical themes through expression and performance; and

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WHEREAS, Tyehimba Jess has won many awards, including the 2017 Pulitzer Prize for *Olio*, an Illinois Arts Council Fellowship in Poetry, the Chicago Sun-Times Poetry Award, and a Whiting Fellowship; his work has appeared in *Soul Fires: Young Black Men on Love and Violence*, *Obsidian III: Literature in the*

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1 African Diaspora, and Power Lines: Ten Years of Poetry from
2 Chicago's Guild Complex; and

3 WHEREAS, Tyehimba Jess teaches poetry and fiction at the
4 College of Staten Island of the City University of New York and
5 is the faculty adviser for Caesura, the college's literary arts
6 magazine; therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
8 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
9 recognize the contributions Tyehimba Jess has made to the
10 literary world and to the people of Illinois, and we
11 congratulate him on his 2017 Pulitzer Prize; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
13 presented to Tyehimba Jess as a symbol of our esteem and
14 respect.