



HR0830

LRB100 17797 ALS 32976 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The Eternal Indian, also known as the Black Hawk
3 Statue, stands high on a bluff within Lowden State Park,
4 overlooking the Rock River and the city of Oregon, Illinois;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, The Eternal Indian is listed on the National
7 Register of Historic Places and attracts visitors from across
8 the nation, greatly contributing to the economy of the
9 surrounding area; and

10 WHEREAS, The statue was created by Elmwood, Illinois native
11 and internationally-renowned sculptor Lorado Taft, who came to
12 the area to found the Eagle's Nest Art Colony, a group of
13 artists from the Chicago Art Institute and the University of
14 Chicago, to escape the city's summer heat; and

15 WHEREAS, Lorado Taft sought to adequately pay tribute to
16 the various Native American tribes who lived on the wooded
17 bluffs, most notably the Sauk, Fox, Sioux, and Mohawk tribes;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, Lorado Taft was particularly inspired by the life
20 of Sauk leader Black Hawk, who was born in the village of
21 Saukenuk, near what is now Rock Island, Illinois, and went on

1 to lead the Sauk and Fox tribes; and

2 WHEREAS, Lorado Taft began constructing the statue in 1909,
3 and the statue was dedicated on July 1, 1911; and

4 WHEREAS, The statue stands just under 50 feet tall and is
5 hollow, reinforced with iron and covered by an outer layer of
6 cement and pink granite, which is as thick as three feet in
7 some spots; and

8 WHEREAS, Eternal Indian is estimated to weigh around
9 536,770 pounds and is thought to be the second largest concrete
10 monolithic statue in the world; and

11 WHEREAS, After 107 years in the varying Illinois weather,
12 the statue has exhibited numerous signs of wear, such as deep
13 cracks and pockmarks, that threaten not just the aesthetic
14 appeal, but also the structural integrity of the statue; and

15 WHEREAS, In 2009, the General Assembly of the State of
16 Illinois appropriated \$350,000 to the Lowden State Park for the
17 renovation of the statue; however, these funds were never
18 received; and

19 WHEREAS, Seeing the lack of state funding, private citizens
20 stepped up and formed the Friends of the Black Hawk Statue

1 Committee, which has worked tirelessly to raise funds and
2 awareness of the statue; their efforts were enhanced on
3 November 5, 2009, when the statue was added to the U.S.
4 National Register of Historic Places; and

5 WHEREAS, We applaud the efforts of the Friends of the Black
6 Hawk Statue Committee, but much of the several hundred thousand
7 dollars that have been raised are being used for upkeep instead
8 of restoration; and

9 WHEREAS, The statue is not only a point of pride for the
10 people of northwest Illinois, it is a national historical
11 landmark and a tribute to the lives of the Native Americans who
12 inhabited Illinois well before the state was established;
13 therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
15 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
16 urge the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to explore
17 ways to finance the renovation of the Eternal Indian statue at
18 Lowden State Park in order to preserve a treasured Illinois
19 monument for generations to come; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That we applaud and admire the efforts of private
21 citizens and the Friends of the Black Hawk Statue Committee in
22 these difficult financial times; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
2 presented to the Chairperson of the Friends of the Black Hawk
3 Statue Committee, the Illinois Department of Natural
4 Resources, and the Mayor of Oregon, Illinois.