



HR0455

LRB101 12766 ALS 61599 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to congratulate Gretchen S. Vapnar on the
4 occasion of her retirement from the Community Crisis Center
5 after 44 years of service; and

6 WHEREAS, Gretchen Vapnar has advocated for people in crisis
7 since 1975; she assisted in the establishment of both the
8 Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault in 1977 and the
9 Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence in 1978; and

10 WHEREAS, Gretchen Vapnar served as a children's worker and
11 Assistant Director of the Community Crisis Center (CCC) before
12 being named Executive Director in 1980; during her service at
13 the CCC, she successfully managed the growth of the Center's
14 shelter from a house for 14 to a historic school building,
15 serving 40 women and children each night; she increased the CCC
16 staff from five to 68 full-time and part-time employees; she
17 increased the budget of \$40,000, which was used as down payment
18 on the house and for salaries and programs, to \$2.9 million in
19 2019; and

20 WHEREAS, In 1982, Gretchen Vapnar established Illinois'
21 first abuser treatment program for men, one of the first
22 domestic violence programs to recognize the need to change the

1 behavior of the abusers; she created new protocols and training
2 for staffs of hospitals, police departments, fire departments,
3 and the courts to benefit the victims of violence; and

4 WHEREAS, In the 1990s, Gretchen Vapnar responded to the
5 community's need and request for "one-stop-service" by housing
6 the community's Food Pantry and Clothing Center and, later, a
7 Health Center and Dental Clinic, all under CCC's roof; she
8 ensured that the Center prioritized "availability" when
9 serving the community and made staff available at the shelter
10 and on the hotline 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 365
11 days a year for 44 years; and

12 WHEREAS, Gretchen Vapnar aggressively worked to raise
13 funds to "keep the doors open" during two recessions, a
14 two-year State budget shutdown, and other economic challenges
15 by conducting three successful capital campaigns to renovate
16 the shelter, presenting an annual gala and auction, operating
17 Reruns Resale Shop, appealing regularly to donors, applying for
18 grants, and creating the Legacy of Caring; and

19 WHEREAS, Gretchen Vapnar has earned recognition and
20 resources for the CCC by receiving the Beatrice Award for
21 Excellence in Management in 1989 and the Impact 100 Chicago
22 Award in 2016; she has received recognition from local
23 organizations, including the YWCA, Club Guadalupano, the Ecker

1 Center, and the City of Elgin; she has received awards from
2 many statewide groups, including the Wendell Jones Award from
3 the Northwest Alliance on Domestic Violence and the Human
4 Dignity Award from the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic
5 Violence; and

6 WHEREAS, Gretchen Vapnar has cultivated and supported
7 employee recruitment and retention by providing training and
8 staff development opportunities, opportunities for promotion,
9 and annual staff awards and recognition; and

10 WHEREAS, Gretchen Vapnar is leaving her legacy of
11 leadership and innovation with the staff and board of the
12 Community Crisis Center, which is now a nationally-recognized,
13 multi-service agency that provides domestic violence and
14 sexual assault programs, a crisis hotline, an economic
15 assistance program, abuser intervention, a children's program,
16 a shelter, and a source for community and professional
17 training; and

18 WHEREAS, Gretchen Vapnar has advocated for her belief that
19 domestic violence is "a human problem, not just a woman's
20 problem" and promoted the philosophy that "A time of crisis is
21 a time of opportunity" for those seeking help and has provided
22 the support to effect change; therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
2 HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
3 we congratulate Gretchen S. Vapnar on the occasion of her
4 retirement from the Community Crisis Center after 44 years of
5 service, and we commend her dedication to educating the public
6 about the issues of domestic violence, sexual assault, economic
7 crisis, and homelessness; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
9 presented to Gretchen Vapnar as an expression of our esteem and
10 respect.