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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of Illinois House of Representatives wish to congratulate Orion Samuelson, a longtime Illinois agriculture figure, on his retirement on December 31, 2020 after 60 years at WGN Radio; and

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WHEREAS, Orion Samuelson's first day on the air at WGN was on September 26, 1960 at 5:00a.m., "milking time"; he was 26 years old; and

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WHEREAS, Orion Samuelson has become one of the most recognizable voices and faces of agriculture in the country; "The Big O", as he is affectionately known, presents daily agriculture and business reports on WGN, in addition to co-hosting The Morning Show on Saturdays with Max Armstrong; over the course of his illustrious career, he has interviewed nine presidents, been involved in four official government trips, and broadcast from more than 40 countries, including the former USSR and Cuba; and

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WHEREAS, Orion Samuelson's lifelong commitment to agriculture has been recognized by organizations in all segments of agri-business; he has received numerous accolades and awards over the years, including an honorary Doctor of Letters from the University of Illinois and a Distinguished

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1 Service Award from the American Farm Bureau Federation; in
2 2001, he was named a laureate of The Lincoln Academy of
3 Illinois and honored with the Lincoln Medal, the highest award
4 bestowed by the State of Illinois; in 2003, he was inducted
5 into the Radio Hall of Fame and was presented the award by
6 fellow member Paul Harvey; and

7 WHEREAS, Orion Samuelson is a 4-H alumni from Vernon
8 County, Wisconsin; a longtime supporter of the 4-H program in
9 Illinois, he has made a tremendous impact in Illinois and
10 beyond; and

11 WHEREAS, Orion Samuelson's name adorns the Junior
12 Livestock Building at the Illinois State Fairgrounds in
13 Springfield and an honorary street sign on the southeast
14 corner of E. Illinois Street and N. Cityfront Plaza Drive in
15 Chicago; and

16 WHEREAS, Orion Samuelson cherishes the honorary Doctor of
17 Letters that he received from the University of Illinois at
18 Urbana-Champaign in 2001 above all of his other honors;
19 therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
21 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
22 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we declare August 17, 2021 as

1 Orion Samuelson Day in the State of Illinois to honor his
2 dedication to the Illinois agriculture industry; and be it
3 further

4 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
5 presented to Orion Samuelson, Larry Wert with WGN Radio, the
6 Illinois Foundation Board and the University of Illinois
7 Extension Program of the College of Agricultural, Consumer,
8 and Environmental Sciences.