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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to recognize the life, achievements,
4 prosperous career, and Hall of Fame-worthy credentials of
5 Walter William "Billy" Pierce; and

6 WHEREAS, Billy Pierce began his career at age 18 with the
7 Detroit Tigers in 1945 and then played for the Chicago White
8 Sox from 1949 to 1961 before playing his final three seasons
9 with the San Francisco Giants; and

10 WHEREAS, Billy Pierce was the Chicago White Sox's star
11 pitcher in the decade from 1952 to 1961 when they posted the
12 third best record in the Major Leagues; by the mid-1950s, the
13 small southpaw stylist, equipped with a pitching bag of tricks
14 that included a devastating fastball, a sharp-breaking curve,
15 a slider, and a change up, was being talked about as one of the
16 top lefties in the sport; and

17 WHEREAS, A seven-time All-Star, Billy Pierce led the
18 American League in complete games three times and led the
19 American League in wins, earned run average, and strikeouts
20 once each; he pitched four one-hitters and seven two-hitters
21 in his career and, on June 27, 1958, came within one batter of
22 becoming the first left-hander in 78 years to throw a perfect

1 game; and

2 WHEREAS, After 14 years on Chicago's South Side, Billy
3 Pierce was traded to the San Francisco Giants on November 30,
4 1961; with something to prove, he finished 16 and 6 in his
5 first season on the West Coast, helping the Giants franchise
6 capture its first pennant since moving to California; he
7 retired after an 18-year big league career with a 211 and 169
8 record, 1,999 strikeouts, 193 complete games, 38 shutouts, and
9 a 3.27 ERA; and

10 WHEREAS, In the discussion of the best pitchers in White
11 Sox history, Billy Pierce tops the franchise's all-time list
12 with 1,796 strikeouts, and his 186 wins are fourth behind Hall
13 of Famers Ted Lyons (260), Red Faber (254), and Ed Walsh (195);
14 and

15 WHEREAS, The White Sox retired Billy Pierce's number 19 in
16 1987 and unveiled a statue in his honor at U.S. Cellular Field
17 in 2007; he was selected to the White Sox All-Century Team in
18 2000; and

19 WHEREAS, Billy Pierce's 1,999 career strikeouts were the
20 fifth most by a left-hander when he retired, and his American
21 League total of 1,842 ranked ninth in league history; he also
22 ranked tenth among left-handers in career wins (211), sixth in

1 games started (432) and games pitched (585), eighth in
2 shutouts (38), and ninth in innings pitched (3,306+2/3),
3 placing him in the top 20 of left-handed starting pitchers in
4 Major League history; and

5 WHEREAS, Billy Pierce's statistics in Innings Pitched,
6 ERA, ERA+, Career Wins, Walks/Hits per Innings Pitched, and
7 Career Strikeouts, among others, compare favorably and, in
8 some cases, exceed those of contemporaries such as Early Wynn,
9 Bob Lemon, Robin Roberts, and Whitey Ford, all of whom have
10 been enshrined in the National Baseball Hall of Fame; and

11 WHEREAS, Rule 5 of the Baseball Writers Association of
12 America rules for eligibility provides that eligibility for
13 membership shall be based not only upon the player's record,
14 playing ability, and contributions to the team(s) on which the
15 player played but also on his integrity, sportsmanship, and
16 character; and

17 WHEREAS, Billy Pierce's contributions to society off the
18 field were as significant as those on it, as witnessed by his
19 many public acts, such as raising millions of dollars through
20 Northwestern University's Cancer Research Charity for
21 Children, Shriners Hospitals for Children, and the Chicago
22 Baseball Cancer Charities, as well as serving as a White Sox
23 ambassador visiting children and retirement homes; and

1 WHEREAS, Despite possessing comparable statistics to
2 players of his era who are members of the National Baseball
3 Hall of Fame in addition to his sterling reputation, Billy
4 Pierce remains on the waiting list to be called to membership
5 in the Hall; therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
7 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
8 we recognize Walter William "Billy" Pierce on his
9 accomplishments and accolades achieved throughout his life;
10 and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That Billy Pierce is deserving of the honor and
12 recognition that accrues to those whose names are called to
13 membership in the National Baseball Hall of Fame; and be it
14 further

15 RESOLVED, That we urge the National Baseball Hall of Fame
16 Golden Days Era committee to vote to enshrine Billy Pierce to
17 his rightful place as a member of the National Baseball Hall of
18 Fame; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
20 presented to the family of Billy Pierce and the Chairman of the
21 Board of Directors of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and

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