



HJ0038

LRB103 06024 LAW 51054 r

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, It is highly fitting that the Illinois General
3 Assembly pays honor and respect to those who have made a
4 difference in their community and the State of Illinois; and

5 WHEREAS, Don Welge of Chester passed away on April 16,
6 2020; and

7 WHEREAS, Don Welge was born to William H. and Rudelle F.
8 (Fritze) Welge in St. Louis, Missouri on July 11, 1935; he
9 married Mary Alice Childers at St. John Lutheran Church in
10 Chester on August 4, 1962; he served in the U.S. Army; and

11 WHEREAS, Don Welge and his family created the Gilster-Mary
12 Lee Corporation, one of the largest independent food
13 processing companies in the United States, establishing food
14 processing plants on both sides of the Mississippi River and
15 providing hundreds of good jobs in production, warehousing,
16 and delivery truck driving; and

17 WHEREAS, Don Welge served as an adviser for the School of
18 Business at Southern Illinois University of Carbondale and
19 Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau; he was
20 also an active Louisiana State University alumnus with the
21 School of Agriculture; and

1 WHEREAS, Don Welge established a reputation as a supporter
2 of economic development, serving as a member of the chambers
3 of commerce in Chester and Steeleville, both in Illinois, and
4 Perryville, Missouri; he was also a director for the Buena
5 Vista National Bank; and

6 WHEREAS, Don Welge was a member of St. John Lutheran
7 Church in Chester; he passionately supported the Boy Scouts
8 for more than 40 years and previously served as council
9 president; he served as master of ceremonies for the Fourth of
10 July celebration held on Kaskaskia Island for many years; and

11 WHEREAS, Don Welge was preceded in death by his parents;
12 his brother, Bruce Welge; and his brother-in-law, Wib Saak;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, At the time of his passing, Don Welge was
15 survived by his wife, Mary Alice Welge; his sons, Robert
16 (Paige) Welge and Thomas (Tracy) Welge; his brother, Mike
17 (Betty) Welge; his sister-in-law, Julia Saak; his
18 grandchildren, Austin Welge, Lauren Welge, Jackson Welge, and
19 William Welge; and his many nieces, nephews, cousins, and
20 friends; and

21 WHEREAS, Don Welge worked hard to gain support for the

1 building of a new bridge over the Mississippi River to connect
2 Illinois and Missouri; and

3 WHEREAS, The Chester Bridge has two 11-foot lanes and
4 carries 7,000 vehicles per day, connecting the cities of
5 Chester, Illinois and Perryville, Missouri across the
6 Mississippi River along Illinois Route 150 and Missouri Route
7 51; and

8 WHEREAS, Plans are underway by the Illinois Department of
9 Transportation and the Missouri Department of Transportation
10 to replace the Chester Bridge; and

11 WHEREAS, Randolph County of Illinois, the Community
12 Foundation of Randolph County, Perry County of Missouri, and
13 the City of Perryville, Missouri have adopted resolutions
14 supporting naming the new Chester Bridge in honor of Don
15 Welge; therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
17 HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
18 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we designate the new Chester
19 Bridge over the Mississippi River along Illinois Route 150 and
20 Missouri Route 51 as the "Don Welge Memorial Bridge"; and be it
21 further

1 RESOLVED, That the Illinois Department of Transportation
2 is requested to erect at suitable locations, consistent with
3 State and federal regulations, appropriate plaques or signs
4 giving notice of the name the "Don Welge Memorial Bridge"; and
5 be it further

6 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
7 presented to the family of Don Welge, Randolph County of
8 Illinois, the Community Foundation of Randolph County, Perry
9 County of Missouri, the City of Perryville, Missouri, the
10 Secretary of the Illinois Department of Transportation, and
11 the Secretary of the Missouri Department of Transportation.