



HR0020

LRB103 05804 MST 50824 r

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to congratulate Marion County on the
4 occasion of its 200th birthday; and

5 WHEREAS, Marion County was organized on the 24th of
6 January 1823 from portions of Jefferson and Fayette counties
7 and was named in honor of Revolutionary War General Francis
8 Marion, the "Swamp Fox", as recommended by State
9 Representative Zadok Casey of Mt. Vernon, who would later
10 serve as the 14th Speaker of the Illinois House; and

11 WHEREAS, Marion County is comprised of 576 square miles,
12 572 square miles of land and 3.7 square miles of water; the
13 southwest corner of Marion County is the intersection of the
14 baseline with the Third Principal Meridian, the point of
15 origin for the third survey of the Northwest Territory under
16 the Land Ordinance of 1785; and

17 WHEREAS, Marion County consists of 17 townships, which
18 includes Alma, Carrigan, Centralia, Foster, Haines, Iuka,
19 Kinmundy, Meacham, Odin, Omega, Patoka, Raccoon, Romine,
20 Salem, Sandoval, Stevenson, and Tonti, all or portions of the
21 cities of Centralia, Kinmundy, Salem, and Wamac, all or
22 portions of the villages of Alma, Central City, Iuka, Junction

1 City, Kell, Odin, Patoka, Sandoval, Vernon, and Walnut Hill,
2 and the current unincorporated communities of Greendale and
3 Tonti; and

4 WHEREAS, The permanent settlement of Marion County began
5 with Captain Samuel Young and his nine-year-old son, Matthew,
6 in 1818, prompted after the New Madrid earthquake and flooding
7 of 1811; there were nearly 2000 people living in the county by
8 1823; and

9 WHEREAS, The history of Marion County is closely tied to
10 the livelihood and commerce of agriculture, the development
11 and expansion of railroads, the discovery of natural resources
12 including oil and coal, and the impact and service of many
13 public officials and leaders who have called Marion County
14 home, including U.S. Secretary of State William Jennings
15 Bryan, U.S. Senator Roland Burris, U.S. Congressmen James
16 Stewart Martin, John Cunningham Martin, Charles Wesley
17 Vursell, General Assembly Members Silas Bryan and John D.
18 Cavaletto, and Presidential Press Secretary James Brady; and

19 WHEREAS, Ninety-five percent of the more than 1,000 farms
20 in Marion County today are still family farms with 71%
21 dedicated to the sale of crops (soybeans, corn, wheat) and 29%
22 to the sale of livestock, poultry, and other products
23 (hogs/pigs, cattle/calves, horses/ponies, sheep/lambs, goats,

1 chickens, and turkeys); and

2 WHEREAS, Seventy-nine farms are listed as Centennial Farms
3 with the Illinois Department of Agriculture, 16 of which are
4 recognized as Sesquicentennial Farms with continuous ownership
5 in the same family for at least 150 years, including the Kuhn,
6 Doolen, Snyder, Shanafelt, Garrett, Jones, Phillips,
7 Stevenson, Brasel, Whitchurch, and Hanks families; and

8 WHEREAS, Marion County, specifically the county seat of
9 Salem, earned the nickname "Gateway of Little Egypt" from the
10 year 1831, when crops failed in the northern two thirds of
11 Illinois and northerner's trips through the region for corn
12 were compared to biblical accounts of Israelites' journeys to
13 Egypt to purchase grain; and

14 WHEREAS, Marion County was a principal marketplace for red
15 top hayseed, which was in great demand in Europe during World
16 War I; it also boasts being recognized as the "Birthplace of
17 the G.I. Bill of Rights" at the American Legion Post 128 in
18 Salem; and

19 WHEREAS, The State's railroad history dates back to 1837,
20 boasted over 12,000 miles of tracks during its "Golden Age",
21 and, by 1856, was home to ten railroads; Marion County's
22 history has been associated with the Chicago & Eastern

1 Illinois Railroad (C&EI), which became part of the Missouri
2 Pacific in 1976 and is now the Union Pacific Railroad, which
3 was established by Abraham Lincoln in 1862, and the Illinois
4 Central Railroad, which merged in 1972 with the Gulf, Mobile,
5 and Ohio Railroad to form the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad,
6 which became the Canadian National Railway in 1998; and

7 WHEREAS, The Illinois Central, the original "Charter Line"
8 from Freeport to Centralia, is memorialized by the 1970 Steve
9 Goodman song, City of New Orleans; and

10 WHEREAS, The first oil well in Marion County was drilled
11 near Patoka in the northwest section of Marion County,
12 discovered by the Adams Oil and Gas company; by the end of
13 1937, there were 200 new producing wells in Illinois, 85 of
14 which were in Marion County with 18 on the Merryman Farm near
15 Patoka; and

16 WHEREAS, In 1938, the Salem Field was discovered in Marion
17 County and produced more than 20 million barrels in its first
18 12 months of operation from July 1938 to July 1939; Marion
19 County alone produced 93 million barrels in 1939, with 259,000
20 barrels daily in March of 1940; in 1942, Salem became the
21 eastern terminus of a 550-mile petroleum pipeline from Texas;
22 and

1 WHEREAS, Marion County boasts eight listings on the
2 National Register of Historic Places, the Sentinel Building
3 and Centralia Commercial Historic District of 55 buildings in
4 Centralia, the Illinois Central Railroad Water Tower & Pump
5 House and the Calendar Rohrbough House in Kinmundy, the
6 William Jennings Bryan Boyhood Home, the Badollet House, the
7 Charles and Naomi Bachmann House, and the Methodist Episcopal
8 Church (Grace United Methodist Church) located in Salem; and

9 WHEREAS, The Illinois State Historical Society currently
10 lists five historical markers in Marion County, commemorating
11 William Jennings Bryan (dedicated 1962), the Half-Way Tavern
12 (dedicated 1964), Salem (dedicated 1965), The Third Principal
13 Meridian (dedicated 1976), and the Centralia Coal Mine No. 5
14 Disaster (dedicated 1991); and

15 WHEREAS, The Illinois State Historical Society has awarded
16 the Sesquicentennial House of Worship Award for a number of
17 churches in Marion County who have continuously served for at
18 least 150 years, including the Little Grove Christian Church
19 in Walnut Hill (1838), the First United Presbyterian Church in
20 Centralia (1856), and the First Christian Church in Centralia
21 (1856); and

22 WHEREAS, The Salem Historical Commission has also
23 recognized the Lemen-Frakes House on their local registry for

1 its connection to Abraham Lincoln, Rev. Benjamin Lemen and
2 Mary (Rand) Lemen, who co-founded the first college in
3 Illinois, and the Sobieski Polish Royal Family; and

4 WHEREAS, The Salem Historical Commission, the Marion
5 County Genealogical & Historical Society, the Centralia Area
6 Historical Society, and the Kinmundy Historical Society all
7 help promote the rich history of Marion County; therefore, be
8 it

9 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
10 HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
11 we congratulate Marion County on its 200th birthday and
12 acknowledge all of the contributions by the residents,
13 churches, community organizations, farmers, families, factory
14 workers, and community leaders that have had an impact on our
15 State and the nation; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
17 presented to the Marion County Board as an expression of our
18 respect and esteem for a vibrant first two hundred years and a
19 leading example of progress.