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HOUSE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives wish to congratulate John Cruz on the occasion of his retirement as a baseball coach after 51 years; and

WHEREAS, Coach Cruz was born to Rafael and Mary (Hernandez) Cruz in Spring Valley on September 15, 1949; he was one of 14 children; he graduated from DePue High School in 1969; and

WHEREAS, Outside of baseball, Coach Cruz worked at Libbey Owens, later renamed Pilkington, for 42 years from 1974 to 2015; and

WHEREAS, Coach Cruz began his 51-year coaching career with the Spring Valley Youth Baseball Program in 1972; he proceeded to coach various travel programs; he then served under Coach Bob Koopmann, assisting in coaching baseball at Illinois Valley Community College, Ashford University in Iowa, and Rockford University; and

WHEREAS, Coach Cruz returned to the Illinois Valley to coach the Princeton High School boys baseball team, the Tigers, in 2009, leading the team to its most productive two-year run with an overall record of 46-15; he then coached

1 the Putnam County High School boys baseball team, the
2 Panthers, for two years before coaching the freshmen baseball
3 team at LaSalle-Peru High School; and

4 WHEREAS, Coach Cruz joined the coaching staff of the Hall
5 High School freshmen and sophomore boys baseball team, the Red
6 Demons, in Spring Valley in 2020, where he has coached for the
7 past four years; his last game as coach with the Red Demons
8 ended with a 20-6 victory, with the team winning their final 10
9 games, finishing 21-6 overall; and

10 WHEREAS, Coach Cruz has coached and mentored countless
11 young players during his 51 years of coaching and left a deep
12 impression at each place he has served; and

13 WHEREAS, Coach Cruz has expressed plans to watch his
14 grandchildren play baseball post-retirement; and

15 WHEREAS, Coach Cruz is the husband of Christine (Andreoni)
16 Cruz, and they have four children, Craig, Lisa, Mary Rae, and
17 Billy; therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
19 HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
20 we congratulate John Cruz on the occasion of his retirement as
21 a baseball coach after 51 years, and we thank him for his

1 commitment and dedication to the game, the teams, and the
2 players; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
4 presented to Coach Cruz as an expression of our esteem and
5 respect.