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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated was founded on December 4, 1906 by seven college men, respectfully known as the "Seven Jewels", on the campus of Cornell University in Ithaca, New York and became the first intercollegiate Greek-letter fraternity established by and for African Americans; and

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WHEREAS, The Seven Jewels of the fraternity, Henry Arthur Callis, Charles Henry Chapman, Eugene Kinckle Jones, George Biddle Kelley, Nathaniel Allison Murray, Robert Harold Ogle, and Vertner Woodson Tandy, recognized the need for a strong bond of brotherhood among African descendants in this country and the need to help correct the educational, economic, political, and social injustices faced by African Americans and other people of color; and

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WHEREAS, Alpha Phi Alpha initially served as a study and support group for minority students who faced racial prejudice, both educationally and socially, at Cornell University; the Jewel founders and early leaders of the fraternity succeeded in laying a firm foundation for Alpha Phi Alpha's principles of scholarship, fellowship, good character, and the uplifting of humanity; and

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1 WHEREAS, While stressing academic excellence among its
2 members since its founding, Alpha Phi Alpha has consistently
3 supplied its voice and vision to the struggle of African
4 Americans and people of color and to issues of civil rights
5 around the world; and

6 WHEREAS, The aims of Alpha Phi Alpha are manly deeds,
7 scholarship, and love for all mankind; and

8 WHEREAS, The mission of Alpha Phi Alpha is to develop
9 leaders, promote brotherhood and academic excellence, and
10 provide service and advocacy for communities, as exemplified
11 through its national programs, including "Go to High School,
12 Go to College", which focuses on the educational achievement
13 of students in elementary, secondary, and post-secondary
14 schools and has given thousands of dollars in scholarship
15 funds to deserving students, "Project Alpha", which teaches
16 teenage pregnancy prevention and sexually transmitted disease
17 prevention to young males, and its "A Voteless People is a
18 Hopeless People" campaign, a voter registration and education
19 program through which thousands of voters have been educated
20 and registered; the fraternity also focuses on providing
21 service through its strategic partnerships with Big Brothers
22 Big Sisters, the Boy Scouts of America, the March of Dimes, the
23 American Heart/American Stroke Association, and the American
24 Cancer Society; and

1 WHEREAS, For more than 117 years, Alpha Phi Alpha has
2 played a fundamental role in the positive development of the
3 character and education of more than 200,000 men around the
4 world; and

5 WHEREAS, Alpha Phi Alpha has over 700 college and alumni
6 chapters in the U.S., Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Europe;
7 this total includes 141 chapters in the Midwestern Region, and
8 32 of those chapters are in Illinois; the fraternity's
9 presence started in Illinois with the founding of the first
10 college chapter in Illinois, the Theta Chapter, in 1910 and
11 the first alumni chapter, the Xi Lambda Chapter, in 1924, both
12 in Chicago; and

13 WHEREAS, Members of Alpha Phi Alpha include many
14 noteworthy leaders in the areas of government, business,
15 entertainment, science, and higher education, including Dr.
16 Martin Luther King Jr., Thurgood Marshall, W.E.B. DuBois, John
17 Hope Franklin, John H. Johnson, Adam Clayton Powell, Andrew
18 Young, Robert Smith, and Cornel West; its membership also
19 includes federal, State, and local elected officials,
20 including U.S. Representative Danny K. Davis, former U.S.
21 Senators Edward Brook and Roland Burris, former State Senator
22 Donne E. Trotter, former State Representative Al Riley, former
23 State Representative Art Turner Jr., former Cook County Board

1 Presidents John and Todd Stroger, and former Mayor of Chicago
2 Eugene Sawyer, among countless others who have long stood at
3 the forefront of the fight for civil and human rights and
4 social change for all Americans; and

5 WHEREAS, Several Alpha Phi Alpha members have served in
6 the Illinois General Assembly, and members currently serving
7 in the 103rd General Assembly are Speaker of the House of
8 Representatives Emanuel "Chris" Welch, Representative Justin
9 Slaughter, and Senator Elgie R. Sims Jr., who also served as
10 the 26th Vice President of the Midwestern Region; and

11 WHEREAS, Alpha Phi Alpha continues to enrich the lives of
12 its members, who, in turn, provide service and advocacy for
13 the communities they serve; and

14 WHEREAS, On May 1, 2024, Illinois members of Alpha Phi
15 Alpha Fraternity, Inc. will participate in Alpha Day at the
16 Illinois State Capital; and

17 WHEREAS, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and Alpha Kappa
18 Alpha Sorority, Inc. have joined together for this year's
19 Alpha Day at the Capitol in a collective effort to advance the
20 priorities of the communities they serve; therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE

1 HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
2 we recognize the 2024 Alpha Phi Alpha Day held at the Illinois
3 State Capitol and welcome the members of Alpha Phi Alpha to the
4 Capitol; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That we declare May 1, 2024 as Alpha Phi Alpha
6 Day in the State of Illinois in honor of Alpha Phi Alpha
7 Fraternity, Incorporated and its continued impact on the
8 communities it serves.