



HR0838

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to recognize the Bud Billiken Parade on
4 95 years of parading in excellence in celebration of Chicago's
5 dynamic and talented African American children; and

6 WHEREAS, In 1929, pioneering African American journalist
7 and businessman Robert S. Abbott, founder of the Chicago
8 Defender newspaper, founded the Bud Billiken Parade on
9 Chicago's South Side, named after the character Bud the
10 Billiken, who was the mascot of the Bud Billiken Club, a social
11 club for young Black people he founded in Chicago; and

12 WHEREAS, Robert Abbott founded the Bud Billiken Parade to
13 celebrate and showcase African-American children in Chicago,
14 especially through dance, music, and performance; and

15 WHEREAS, The tradition of the Bud Billiken Parade has
16 remained to this day a celebration of Black youth in Chicago,
17 with the parade traditionally viewed in Chicago's
18 African-American communities as the symbolic start of the
19 school year and the end of summer; and

20 WHEREAS, The parade has historically attracted leaders and
21 celebrities from across the country to view or participate in

1 the parade, including President Harry Truman, future president
2 and then-Senator Barack Obama, Duke Ellington, Oprah Winfrey,
3 Muhammad Ali, Frank Thomas, Michael Jordan, Louis Armstrong,
4 and Spike Lee, among others; and

5 WHEREAS, The management and operation of the Bud Billiken
6 Parade has remained within the Abbott family, with the fourth
7 generation of leadership from his grandniece, Myiti
8 Sengstacke-Rice, who has continued to ensure the parade and
9 associated festivities celebrate Black youth in Chicago and
10 promote education and empowerment in the tradition of Robert
11 Abbott through the awarding of scholarships in partnership
12 with Chicago Defender Charities; and

13 WHEREAS, The Bud Billiken Parade has historically been the
14 largest Black-oriented parade and back to school parade in the
15 world and the second-largest parade in the United States,
16 after the Rose Bowl Parade, being viewed and attended by over
17 one million people and featuring a live television broadcast;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, In August 2024, the Bud Billiken Parade will
20 celebrate its 95th year, coming together to celebrate the rich
21 history of Chicago's African American citizens and the
22 creativity and expression of Black children; therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
2 HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
3 we recognize the Bud Billiken Parade on 95 years of parading in
4 excellence in celebration of Chicago's dynamic and talented
5 African American children; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
7 presented to Myiti Sengstacke-Rice of the Bud Billiken Parade
8 as an expression of our respect and esteem.