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SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate wish to
3 congratulate the Garden of Prayer Youth Center on celebrating
4 45 years of providing services to at-risk children throughout
5 the State of Illinois; and

6 WHEREAS, In 1970, Reverend Shole and Doris Jordan
7 purchased a 54 acre farm in Momence and became foster parents
8 with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS);
9 they opened their hearts and their home to children and
10 families in need of food, clothing, shelter, and love; and

11 WHEREAS, In 1978, Doris Jordan established their home as a
12 mission and named it the Garden of Prayer Deliverance Center;
13 they dedicated 47 acres of their land and their farm house for
14 the sole purpose of housing those in immediate need of food and
15 shelter; and

16 WHEREAS, Reverend Shole Jordan, a Navy veteran, retired as
17 a union welder from the General Motors Chicago Plant on 103rd
18 Street, and Doris Jordan was retired from St. Luke
19 Presbyterian Hospital of Chicago as a nursing aide; they
20 decided to move to a new home in 1978 and left their farm and
21 their farmhouse in the care of Vurnice Maloney to continue the
22 mission of serving at-risk children and families; and

1 WHEREAS, In 1994, Vurnice Maloney, a registered nurse,
2 retired from the Shapiro Developmental Center in Kankakee as a
3 unit director and devoted her time and attention to the growth
4 and expansion of the Garden of Prayer Youth Center; and

5 WHEREAS, With guidance from Lorine Samuels, Franklin and
6 Vurnice Maloney incorporated the Garden of Prayer Youth Center
7 as a 501c3 not-for-profit organization in March of 1995; and

8 WHEREAS, Vurnice and Franklin Maloney became licensed
9 foster parents and provided emergency foster care to at-risk
10 male teens involved with DCFS and Juvenile Justice; Vurnice
11 Maloney expanded the reach of the Garden of Prayer Youth
12 Center by establishing an adoption preservation program, a
13 counseling service, a mentoring program, and a summer camp and
14 by providing supplemental education services; she also
15 implemented Teen REACH Afterschool programming serving
16 students from Lorenzo R. Smith School in Pembroke and students
17 from Momence Jr. High School; and

18 WHEREAS, Under the leadership of Vurnice Maloney, the
19 Garden of Prayer Youth Center received the Illinois Governor's
20 Hometown and Governor's Cup Award in 2004; it received awards
21 and recognitions from DCFS, the Illinois House of
22 Representatives, and the city and county of Kankakee; and

1 WHEREAS, On October 1, 2006, Michael Maloney became the
2 executive director of the Garden of Prayer Youth Center and
3 continued the vision and mission of his grandparents and
4 parents and established the organization as a licensed child
5 welfare agency in 2007; and

6 WHEREAS, Under the leadership of Michael Maloney, the
7 Garden of Prayer Youth Center has become an accredited
8 trauma-informed agency that has expanded to operate two
9 therapeutic group homes for teens and two child care centers
10 serving children ages six weeks to 12 years; it provides
11 specialized and emergency foster care and parent mentoring and
12 continues to provide summer camp and Teen REACH afterschool
13 programming; and

14 WHEREAS, The Garden of Prayer Youth Center and its board
15 of directors ensure that the agency consistently meets and
16 exceeds the highest standards set by the Commission on
17 Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) and National
18 Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs
19 (NAC); the Garden of Prayer Early Education Centers are the
20 only NAC accredited child care centers in Kankakee County
21 awarded the Gold Circle of Quality; and

22 WHEREAS, The Garden of Prayer Youth Center is the largest

1 African American-owned and led business in Kankakee County
2 with over 70 employees and nine locations; it is the only
3 African American child welfare agency located outside of Cook
4 County and the City of Chicago; therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL
6 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we congratulate the
7 Garden of Prayer Youth Center on celebrating 45 years of
8 providing services to at-risk children throughout the State of
9 Illinois, and we wish them many more successful years; and be
10 it further

11 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
12 presented to the Garden of Prayer Youth Center as a symbol of
13 our respect and esteem.