



SR0574

LRB103 35143 ECR 65107 r

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate wish to congratulate the Diocese of Springfield on the occasion of its centennial anniversary of the transfer of the diocese from Alton to Springfield; and

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WHEREAS, On October 2, 1923, Pope Pius XI translated the diocesan See from Alton to Springfield; the pope named James Aloysius Griffin, the pastor of St. Mary Nativity Catholic Church in Joliet, the bishop who would be responsible for moving the chancery from Alton to Springfield; he arrived in Springfield on February 28, 1924; and

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WHEREAS, Bishop Griffin was installed as the bishop at St. Mary's Church, which served as the pro-cathedral of the diocese for the next four years; in 1927, he launched the Cathedral Campaign to raise money to replace the aging Cathedral building; and

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WHEREAS, Bishop Griffin assisted Cardinal George Mundelein in planning and hosting the 28th International Eucharistic Congress in Chicago from June 24 to June 26, 1926, where hundreds of thousands of Catholics were in attendance; and

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WHEREAS, After the congress, Bishop Griffin hosted several

1 cardinals, archbishops, and bishops in Springfield for the  
2 Central Verein Convention on June 2, 1926, where he led  
3 attendees on a pilgrimage to the tomb of Abraham Lincoln; and

4 WHEREAS, Bishop Griffin dedicated and opened the newly  
5 constructed Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, with the  
6 dedication ceremonies taking place from October 14 to October  
7 16, 1928; and

8 WHEREAS, From 1932 through 1937, during a labor dispute in  
9 Springfield known as the Coal Miner's War, Bishop Griffin  
10 attempted to negotiate fair wages for workers in the various  
11 mines throughout the diocese; and

12 WHEREAS, Bishop Griffin died on August 5, 1948, leading  
13 Pope Pius XII to appoint William Aloysius O'Connor to be the  
14 next bishop of Springfield on December 28, 1948; he arrived in  
15 the city on March 16, 1949; and

16 WHEREAS, After St. Anthony's Hospital in Effingham was  
17 destroyed by a fire on April 4, 1949, Bishop O'Connor oversaw  
18 the updating of hospitals and diocesan properties to prevent  
19 future fire disasters, establishing the Office of Insurance to  
20 assist in this endeavor; and

21 WHEREAS, In 1959, Bishop O'Connor was able to attend all

1 four sessions of the ecumenical council, known as Vatican II;  
2 and

3 WHEREAS, In 1969, Bishop O'Connor established the Office  
4 for Worship and the Office for Catholic Education, the first  
5 of many curial agencies created to assist parishes and other  
6 Catholic institutions in the diocese; and

7 WHEREAS, On July 22, 1975, Bishop O'Connor submitted his  
8 retirement, and Pope Paul VI appointed Joseph A. McNicholas as  
9 the next bishop in Springfield; and

10 WHEREAS, Bishop McNicholas was a staunch civil rights  
11 advocate, and he was a leader in school desegregation and  
12 helped organize the Martin Luther King Day Breakfast; as a  
13 priest and auxiliary bishop in St. Louis, his assignments  
14 included serving on the Health & Welfare Council of St. Louis,  
15 the National Association of Social Workers, the Missouri Child  
16 Welfare Commission, and the National Office of Black  
17 Catholics; and

18 WHEREAS, In 1976, Bishop McNicholas implemented a  
19 diocesan-wide pro-life program in response to the 1973 Roe v.  
20 Wade U.S. Supreme Court decision; and

21 WHEREAS, Bishop McNicholas' episcopacy was short lived

1 when he died suddenly on April 17, 1983; his predecessor,  
2 Bishop O'Connor, died that same year on November 14, 1983; and

3 WHEREAS, Pope John Paul II appointed Daniel Ryan as the  
4 next bishop of the Diocese of Springfield, and he was  
5 installed on January 18, 1984; and

6 WHEREAS, In July 1995, facing a declining number of  
7 priests, Bishop Ryan oversaw the Parish Pastoral Plan,  
8 designed to study the status of parishes and priests across  
9 the diocese and offer solutions for long-term parish vitality;  
10 and

11 WHEREAS, On October 19, 1999, the Vatican announced the  
12 retirement of Bishop Ryan and the appointment of Bishop George  
13 J. Lucas as his successor; a priest of the Archdiocese of St.  
14 Louis, he was the first appointee to be ordained as a bishop in  
15 the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Springfield; and

16 WHEREAS, Bishop Lucas launched the endowment campaign  
17 Harvest of Thanks-Springtime of Hope to ensure long-term  
18 viability of the diocese, including supporting the work of  
19 Catholic Charities, assisting in the formation of seminarians  
20 and deacon candidates, and providing aid for the care of  
21 retired priests of the diocese; and

1           WHEREAS, The Diocese of Springfield celebrated the 150th  
2 anniversary of its founding with Jubilee 2003, an event that  
3 officially began on December 9, 2002; the diocese held a day  
4 long celebration at the Illinois State Fairgrounds, where an  
5 estimated 20,000 Catholics from all over the diocese attended  
6 on June 28, 2003; and

7           WHEREAS, In May 2007, Bishop Lucas initiated the Built on  
8 Faith-Renewed in Hope campaign to raise the \$11 million  
9 dollars needed to restore the Cathedral of the Immaculate  
10 Conception; and

11           WHEREAS, On July 22, 2009, Bishop Lucas was appointed the  
12 Archbishop of Omaha, becoming the first bishop of the Diocese  
13 of Springfield to be appointed to archbishop; and

14           WHEREAS, On April 20, 2010, Pope Benedict XVI appointed  
15 Bishop Thomas John Paprocki of the Archdiocese of Chicago as  
16 Bishop Lucas' successor, and he was installed as the ninth and  
17 current bishop of the Diocese of Springfield on June 22, 2010;  
18 and

19           WHEREAS, In 2017, Bishop Paprocki guided the diocese  
20 through the Fourth Diocesan Synod with the goal of convincing  
21 clergy and the laity to make a heartfelt commitment to  
22 stewardship and discipleship as a way of life; and

1           WHEREAS, Bishop Paprocki has made the connection between  
2 sports and faith as a focus of his ministry, writing two books,  
3 Holy Goals for Body and Soul: Eight Steps to Connect Sports  
4 with God and Faith and Running for a Higher Purpose: Eight  
5 Steps to Spiritual and Physical Fitness; and

6           WHEREAS, Bishop Paprocki currently serves as an adjunct  
7 professor of Law, Business, and Bioethics at Quincy  
8 University's Oakley School of Business; he also serves on the  
9 Illinois Catholic Health Association Board and as the chairman  
10 of the Committee on Canonical Affairs and Church Governance  
11 for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops; and

12           WHEREAS, Thousands of Catholics from across the Diocese of  
13 Springfield will join Bishop Paprocki as he celebrates Mass at  
14 the first Eucharistic Congress at the Bank of Springfield  
15 Center in Springfield on October 28, 2023; therefore, be it

16           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL  
17 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we congratulate the  
18 Diocese of Springfield on the occasion of its centennial  
19 anniversary of the transfer of the diocese from Alton to  
20 Springfield, and we recognize the contributions bishops of the  
21 diocese have made to the community throughout the years; and  
22 be it further

1           RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
2 presented to the Diocese of Springfield as a symbol of our  
3 esteem and respect.