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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Pramukh Swami Maharaj is the third and current spiritual leader of the BAPS Swaminarayan Organization and is believed to be the fifth spiritual successor to Bhagwan Swaminarayan; and

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WHEREAS, Born Shantilal Patel, on December 7, 1921 in the village of Chansad in Gujarat, India, he was initiated into monkhood as Sadhu Narayanswarupdas; at the age of 28, he was appointed president (Pramukh) of BAPS by the then guru of the organization, Shastriji Maharaj, and from that day, affectionally called Pramukh Swami; after Shastriji Maharaj passed away, he was succeeded by Yogiji Maharaj, who in turn chose Pramukh Swami Maharaj to be his successor as the spiritual leader of BAPS; and

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WHEREAS, Under Pramukh Swami Maharaj's leadership, the BAPS Swaminarayan Organization, and Hinduism in general, has enjoyed much success in promoting its message in India and abroad; this partly lies in the organization's approach, which is characteristic of other monotheistic religions, namely their centralization and huge organizational strength, and their emphasis on community development, the practice of dharma, and the understanding of spiritual knowledge based on the teachings of Bhagwan Swaminarayan, founder of the

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1 Swaminarayan movement within Hinduism in the late 18th century;  
2 many mainstream Hindus, primarily from the state of Gujarat in  
3 India, find themselves attracted to this and start identifying  
4 with BAPS; and

5 WHEREAS, Away from India, Pramukh Swami Maharaj has  
6 embarked on 15 world tours, covering 43 countries in 5  
7 continents over the last 25 years; over 600 Temples and 9,000  
8 spiritual centers have been established across Africa,  
9 America, Australia, Europe, the Far East and the Middle East;  
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Pramukh Swami Maharaj is credited as being the  
12 inspirer of the Swaminarayan Akshardham cultural complexes in  
13 New Delhi and Gujarat, and numerous traditionally built stone  
14 temples across the world, such as the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan  
15 Mandirs in London, Chicago, Houston, and Nairobi; and

16 WHEREAS, Pramukh Swami Maharaj has contributed to projects  
17 in social (famine relief, cattle camps, earthquake relief  
18 work), educational (literacy campaigns, youth hostels),  
19 ecological (tree planting, well recharging, recycling  
20 projects), medical (diagnostic camps, blood donation), moral  
21 (anti-addiction drives), cultural (child and youth  
22 development), and spiritual areas; and

1           WHEREAS, In July 2000, Pramukh Swami Maharaj was awarded a  
2 place in the Guinness World Records as one of the 20 most  
3 influential people in the world; also in July 2000, BAPS Shri  
4 Swaminarayan Mandir London, a temple inspired by Pramukh Swami  
5 Maharaj, was awarded a Guinness World Record for being the  
6 largest Hindu temple outside India; in November 2000, BAPS Shri  
7 Swaminarayan Mandir, London was awarded a Guinness World Record  
8 for the "Most Different Dishes on Display", where 1,247  
9 different vegetarian dishes were displayed; the dishes were on  
10 display as part of the Annakut festival, celebrating the Hindu  
11 New Year; and

12           WHEREAS, The BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir (Chicago), the  
13 largest traditional Hindu mandir constructed of stone and  
14 marble in the United States, is located on Illinois Route 59 in  
15 Bartlett; therefore, be it

16           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
17 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE  
18 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that the portion of Illinois Route 59  
19 between Illinois Route 64 and Army Trail Road in Bartlett be  
20 designated the Pramukh Swami Maharaj Road; and be it further

21           RESOLVED, That the Illinois Department of Transportation  
22 is requested to erect at suitable locations, consistent with  
23 State rules, appropriate plaques or signs giving notice of the

1 name; and be it further

2       RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be delivered to  
3 the Illinois Secretary of Transportation and to officials of  
4 the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir (Chicago), in Bartlett.