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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives wish to congratulate recording artist Gretchen Wilson, a native of Pocahontas, on all her success; and

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WHEREAS, Gretchen Wilson went from obscurity to phenomenon overnight; her first single, "Redneck Woman," spent six weeks at #1; her debut album, *Here For The Party*, sold more than five million copies; she won across-the-board awards including a Grammy and Academy of Country Music, Country Music Association, and American Music Association awards for best female vocalist; and she has toured around the world promoting her albums; and

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WHEREAS, Her second album, *All Jacked Up*, won great reviews and went to platinum status; over the last three years, she has been featured on "60 Minutes," "Dateline NBC," "20/20 Primetime" and CNN's "People In The News," and she has appeared on virtually every morning and late-night television show; magazine covers, major news features, and her book, *Redneck Woman: Stories from My Life*, have all told her story, with the book making the prestigious New York Times Best Seller List; and

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WHEREAS, Gretchen Wilson is a single mother of daughter Grace, and has property outside Nashville; she is the head of a

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1 major business enterprise, the focal point of a huge touring  
2 company, and a major modern media star; she came from  
3 Pocahontas, in southern Illinois, where she was born to a  
4 16-year-old mother; with her father not part of her life, she  
5 got much of her grounding from her grandmother, who introduced  
6 her to the classic country music of Patsy Cline, among others;  
7 and

8 WHEREAS, Amid life's uncertainties, trailers, moving to  
9 stay ahead of rent collectors, taking care of her younger  
10 brother, bartending at 14 alongside her mother, Gretchen Wilson  
11 found release in country and rock music; she was on her own by  
12 15, managing Big O's, a bar outside town, and singing for its  
13 rough-and-tumble patrons; she sang along to CD's for tips until  
14 she was old enough to join a cover band and sing as far down the  
15 interstate as St. Louis; in 1996 she went to Nashville, where  
16 she put her bartending skills to use in Printers' Alley,  
17 sitting in with the band; it was there that John Rich and Big  
18 Kenny, known on the country and western music scene as Big and  
19 Rich, discovered her; She began singing demos and became part  
20 of the fledgling Muzik Mafia, singing on Tuesday nights in  
21 ever-bigger clubs and pitching herself to record labels; and

22 WHEREAS, Along with John Rich, she wrote her first single  
23 "Redneck Woman" and the rest is history; beyond her career and  
24 family, Gretchen has maintained an active charitable role,

1 performing recently in clubs and small theaters to raise money  
2 for organizations like St. Jude Children's Research Hospital  
3 and Children's Miracle Network; therefore, be it

4       RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
5 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we  
6 congratulate Gretchen Wilson on her success and wish her  
7 continued good fortune in the future; and be it further

8       RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
9 presented to Gretchen Wilson as a symbol of our respect and  
10 admiration.