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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are pleased to honor Northern Illinois
4 University Head Football Coach Joe Novak on his career as a
5 football coach and on his retirement; and

6 WHEREAS, Joe Novak was a three-sport letterman at Mentor,
7 Ohio, High School and was inducted into the Mentor High School
8 Sports Hall of Fame in 1999; he received a Bachelor's degree in
9 Education in 1967 and a Master's in Education Administration
10 from Miami University in 1968; he and his wife, the former
11 Carole Hinkel of Mentor, have two grown sons, David and Jeremy,
12 and three grandchildren; and

13 WHEREAS, Joe Novak began his prep coaching career as
14 defensive ends coach at Warren, Ohio, Western Reserve High
15 School in 1968; he was elevated to head coach five years later,
16 and led Western Reserve to a 12-0 record and Ohio's large
17 school division state title, earning 1972 Coach of the Year
18 honors; he took Western Reserve back to the state finals a year
19 later with an 11-1 record; and

20 WHEREAS, He began his collegiate coaching career as an
21 assistant at Miami University; at the University of Illinois
22 Joe Novak worked for Gary Moeller as defensive line coach

1 before joining the coaching staff at Indiana; he was a part of
2 65 Hoosier triumphs, seven winning regular seasons, and six
3 postseason bowl appearances in 12 years; and

4 WHEREAS, Joe Novak was hired as Northern Illinois
5 University's 19th head football coach on December 22, 1995,
6 after 22 seasons as a full-time assistant at the NCAA Division
7 I-A level at his alma mater, Miami University, (1974-1976), the
8 University of Illinois (1977-1979), Northern Illinois
9 University (1980-1983), and Indiana University (1984-1995);
10 and

11 WHEREAS, The principles of honesty, integrity, and respect
12 have guided Joe Novak, not only throughout his 12 year tenure
13 as head coach of the Northern Illinois University football
14 team, but throughout his 40 years as a football coach; and

15 WHEREAS, Joe Novak's coaching philosophy included teaching
16 the basic life skills that have made so many of his players
17 successful off the field; he demanded toughness, hard work, and
18 accountability from each of his Huskie players throughout the
19 years; and

20 WHEREAS, Joe Novak emphasized academics and viewed the
21 student-athlete as a whole person; players learned the program
22 goals from Coach Novak: earn an NIU degree, represent Northern

1 Illinois University in a first class fashion, and win; and

2 WHEREAS, Joe Novak was selected to coach in the 2003
3 Blue-Gray Classic, was the recipient of the prestigious Ray
4 Meyer Coach Award at the Giant Awards Dinner in Chicago in June
5 of 2005, and is dean of Mid-American Conference coaches; and

6 WHEREAS, Teams led by Joe Novak posted a school-record
7 seven straight winning seasons; Northern Illinois ranked as a
8 top team in Illinois, and one of the Top 30 NCAA Football Bowl
9 Subdivision teams, in terms of winning percentage, since 2000;
10 Northern Illinois' resurgence has captured the attention of
11 fans and media in Chicago, across the region, and throughout
12 the nation; and

13 WHEREAS, Joe Novak led his team to landmark wins against
14 two high profile BCS teams in 2003 by defeating the 15th ranked
15 University of Maryland at home and traveling to Tuscaloosa to
16 beat the 21st ranked University of Alabama; the 2003 Huskies
17 rose to as high as 10th in initial BCS standings in 2003; in
18 2004 Coach Novak led NIU to their first bowl victory since 1983
19 by becoming the Silicon Valley Bowl champions; during the 2005
20 season NIU appeared in their first MAC Championship and the
21 following season the Huskies played in the 2006 Poinsettia
22 Bowl; and

1 WHEREAS, Thanks to the winning tradition established by
2 Coach Novak, Northern Illinois University realized a
3 significant upgrade to its football facilities in the fall of
4 2007 with the opening of the Jeffrey and Kimberly Yordon
5 Center; the Student-Athlete Academic Support Services center
6 in the bottom floor will directly and significantly impact not
7 only Huskie football players, but student-athletes in each of
8 the 17 NIU sports programs and is named in honor of Novak and
9 his wife, Carole; therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
11 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
12 congratulate Joe Novak on his retirement as Head Football Coach
13 of Northern Illinois University and wish him the best in the
14 future; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
16 presented to Coach Joe Novak as a token of our esteem.