



HR0523

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives are pleased to honor milestones in the lives of citizens of the State of Illinois; and

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WHEREAS, Rita T. Picken, longtime Hyde Park resident, will turn 90 on July 6, 2009; and

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WHEREAS, Rita was born in Wausau, Wisconsin; she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree, Phi Beta Kappa, from the University of Wisconsin in 1942 and a Master of Science degree from the University of California, Los Angeles in 1968; and

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WHEREAS, While teaching English for the two-year University of Wisconsin Center in Kenosha, Rita and her late husband, Dean Barnard Tallent, helped to establish the four-year University of Wisconsin Parkside campus in Kenosha; and

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WHEREAS, Rita was elected Kenosha's Woman of the Year in 1969; and

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WHEREAS, In 1976, Rita married Robert F. Picken and moved to Chicago, where her commitment to community activism flourished; and

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1 WHEREAS, Rita was particularly active with St. Thomas the
2 Apostle Parish; she was a member of the flower committee,
3 arranging flowers for masses and special events; she regularly
4 worked the candy booth at the Parish's Christmas Bazaar; she
5 also organized ethnic lunches at the church, promoting the
6 exchange of cultures among the diverse parishioners; and

7 WHEREAS, Rita served on the board of her family-owned
8 company, Peerless Confection Company, for almost 25 years; she
9 was known for being an active participant in the lives of the
10 employees and every year sent Christmas cards to each and every
11 one of the workers; and

12 WHEREAS, Rita was active with the Hyde Park Neighborhood
13 Club; she served on the board in the 1980s and was instrumental
14 in implementing programs such as the Good Neighbors Awards and
15 its service auctions, which raised money when volunteers
16 offered their services in exchange for donations to the Club;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, Rita also volunteered her time with the University
19 of Chicago Service League, serving as the President from 1983
20 to 1984; she was also active in the Service League's drama
21 group and its Chicago Commons program; and

1 WHEREAS, Rita has volunteered her time at the Oriental
2 Institute for over 30 years and has been a member of the
3 Visiting Committee since 1985; with the help of her daughter,
4 Kitty, she helped fund the Robert F. Picken Family Nubia
5 Gallery; she was also the creator of the Institute's Pyramid
6 Parties; on May 6 of this year Rita was named the 2009 Breasted
7 Medallion recipient at the Oriental Institute's 90th Jubilee
8 celebration; and

9 WHEREAS, Rita has always been a political activist; she was
10 an active member of the League of Women Voters in Wisconsin
11 and, after moving to Chicago, became active with the
12 Independent Voters of Illinois-Independent Precinct
13 Organization; she was often seen even on the worst of Chicago's
14 winter days passing out campaign literature, which led some
15 constituents to assume she was the mother of whichever
16 candidate it happened to be, as only a mother would be out in
17 weather like that; and

18 WHEREAS, Rita loves to garden, travel, attend the theater,
19 read, and spoil her pet dog, Maggie; therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
21 NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
22 congratulate Rita T. Picken on her ninetieth birthday and wish
23 her many more; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
2 presented to Rita T. Picken as a symbol of our affection,
3 gratitude, and respect.