



HR1110

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are pleased to honor the Sheldon Peck Homestead
4 in Lombard; the popular museum and tourist destination is
5 recognized as the first local landmark in Lombard; and

6 WHEREAS, Sheldon and Harriet Corey Peck were pioneers in
7 1837, moving from Vermont and New York to Illinois to settle
8 "the west" prairie lands of Illinois; Sheldon Peck is
9 nationally famous for his folk art portraits, which are now in
10 major art museums like the Art Institute of Chicago, the New
11 York Folk Art museum, the Illinois History Museum, Colonial
12 Williamsburg, and others; in the early 1800s, portraits were
13 necessary since cameras had not yet been invented; his first
14 portraits were of his family; today the Smithsonian archive
15 lists 50 known Sheldon Peck portraits; and

16 WHEREAS, Sheldon Peck was a self-taught artist whose only
17 signature was "rabbit track" prints on the portrait; and

18 WHEREAS, The Peck family was active as conductors in the
19 Underground Railroad movement to help slaves escape from the
20 south to freedom in the north; as members of the Methodist
21 church, the Peck family felt it was their religious
22 responsibility to help end slavery; and

1 WHEREAS, Sheldon Peck was listed as a political leader of
2 the Illinois Radical Abolitionist Party; his sons, John and
3 Charles, were also known abolitionists; and

4 WHEREAS, Sheldon Peck died in 1868; after his wife died,
5 Frank, the youngest son, inherited the family house; the Peck
6 house remained where it was built, and has continuously been
7 owned by Peck descendants until great-grandson, Allen Mertz,
8 donated the house to the Lombard Historical Society for use as
9 a pioneer museum; the historic home was dedicated as a local
10 museum in 1999; and

11 WHEREAS, Today over 7,000 people visit Lombard's two
12 museums to attend events, take tours, and participate in
13 special programs; the Sheldon Peck Homestead museum site, which
14 is owned and managed by the Lombard Historical Society, shares
15 Peck's story with visitors, stories of his famous portrait
16 paintings, his work as an abolitionist and underground railroad
17 conductor, his early Illinois farm life, and his effort to
18 start the first school in Babcock Grove for his and neighboring
19 children; and

20 WHEREAS, The Village of Lombard and the Historical
21 Commission officially recognized the Sheldon Peck Homestead as
22 its first local landmark in 2008; therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
2 NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
3 honor the Sheldon Peck Homestead and its historic significance
4 to the State of Illinois; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
6 presented to the Lombard Historical Society and Lombard
7 Historical Commission as a symbol of our respect and esteem.