



HJ0025

LRB097 11373 HEP 53640 r

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, On September 1, 1939 Poland was invaded by  
3 Germany, and although Russian signed a pact against Germany and  
4 promised to help Poland, they failed to keep that promise and  
5 attacked Poland on September 17, 1939; and

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WHEREAS, Approximately 250,000 soldiers of the defeated  
7 Polish army who fled east were detained without resistance by  
8 advancing Soviet troops and were sent to a prison camp in  
9 Kozielsk; and

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WHEREAS, The prisoners, which included lawyers and other  
11 Polish professionals in addition to thousands of military  
12 reserve officers, were methodically shot at sites in Western  
13 Russia, Ukraine and Belarus in April and May of 1940; and

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WHEREAS, Those killed numbered 21,857, according to a  
15 since-released internal 1959 Soviet memorandum, and in 1943,  
16 the German Army found a pit in the Katyn forest in Russia,  
17 where they exhumed the remains of more than 4,000 Polish  
18 officers, which became a propaganda coup for the Germans; and

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WHEREAS, Although a United States Congressional committee  
20 confirmed that the Soviets were responsible in 1952, little was  
21 done to acknowledge the Katyn Massacre, though in 1990, Mikhail

1 Gorbachev approved an item from the state news agency  
2 acknowledging Soviet responsibility; and

3 WHEREAS, Wojciech Seweryn was an immigrant from Poland who  
4 was born on the first day of World War II and whose father was a  
5 reserve infantry officer for the Polish army; and

6 WHEREAS, Wojciech's father, Mieczyslaw, was part of the  
7 250,000 defeated soldiers that were sent to the camp in  
8 Kozielsk and killed in the Katyn forest; and

9 WHEREAS, Wojciech came to the United States and found a  
10 home in Chicago, where he devoted his time to educate the  
11 Polish community about what happened in the Katyn forest; and

12 WHEREAS, Wojciech for 40 years dreamed of building a  
13 monument to honor the victims of the Katyn Massacre, and  
14 realized that dream in May 2007, when a monument to honor the  
15 victims was completed in Niles, Illinois; and

16 WHEREAS, Wojciech served as Grand Marshal for the Polish  
17 Parade in 2007 and in the crowning moment of his life, he was  
18 invited by the Polish President Lech Kaczynski to fly with him  
19 and other leaders to Katyn on April 10, 2010; and

20 WHEREAS, On the way to the ceremony in Katyn, the plane

1 crashed, killing all passengers on board; therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
3 NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE  
4 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, we designate a portion of Milwaukee  
5 Avenue from Albion Avenue to Gross Pointe Road in Chicago,  
6 Illinois the Wojciech M. Seweryn Memorial Road; and be it  
7 further

8 RESOLVED, That the Illinois Department of Transportation  
9 is requested to erect at suitable locations, consistent with  
10 State regulations, plaques or signs giving notice of the name;  
11 and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
13 presented to the Illinois Secretary of Transportation and to  
14 the family of Wojciech Seweryn.