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LRB097 11960 KXB 55548 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are pleased to congratulate Michael Schuette
4 of Breese on being named the Catholic Charities USA 2011
5 Volunteer of the Year Award winner; and

6 WHEREAS, For more than 15 years, Michael Schuette has
7 supported the work of Catholic Charities of Southern Illinois;
8 during the last 10 years, he served as chair of the Catholic
9 Charities of Southern Illinois Board and for the last 15 years
10 has served as the chair of Poverty Services, a volunteer-run
11 agency of Catholic Charities of Southern Illinois which
12 addresses the root causes of poverty by helping people overcome
13 barriers to gainful employment; and

14 WHEREAS, In his early 20s, Michael started teaching prison
15 inmates to read; after more than 30 years of volunteer literacy
16 efforts, he brought his passion for helping inmates learn to
17 read to his volunteer work for Catholic Charities of Southern
18 Illinois; as volunteer chair, he partnered Poverty Services
19 with a statewide group to lobby State representatives for
20 legislation that required inmate literacy classes; and

21 WHEREAS, With the help of legislators and Kaskaskia
22 College, he established an incentive-paid inmate tutoring

1 position at Illinois' correctional centers; in his "Inmates
2 Helping Inmates" program, prison authorities select the
3 inmates to be trained by the community college as peer-to-peer
4 reading tutors/teacher aides of illiterate inmate students;
5 the program has been a phenomenal success, with reading
6 improvement greatly increased among thousands of inmates; and

7 WHEREAS, To follow up on inmates leaving correctional
8 facilities, he partnered Poverty Services with Catholic
9 Charities' St. Vincent de Paul Society, DOC Parole, Life
10 Skills, and other referral service agencies to develop a
11 program to extend "Inmates Helping Inmates" participants
12 literacy classes toward GED and college as inmates re-enter
13 society; the follow-up program also assesses for mental
14 illness, substance abuse, social needs, and will provide each
15 individual with contact information to locate employment and
16 needed resources; and

17 WHEREAS, He has also led Poverty Services in developing
18 programs and resources to help clients find and keep
19 employment, such as pre-employment training, transportation
20 assistance, and business attire assistance; after his first 5
21 years as chair of Poverty Services, he increased his volunteer
22 work to serve as chair of the Catholic Charities of Southern
23 Illinois Board; and

1 WHEREAS, During his time as board chair, he worked on many
2 committees, notably those working to raise funds for the
3 agency, improve communications with parishes throughout the
4 diocese, and advocate for the agency to the community and
5 lawmakers; for over a year, he also served on the Diocese of
6 Belleville's Bishop's Task Force to reorganize Catholic
7 Charities of Southern Illinois to find a way for it to function
8 with limited or no funding; and

9 WHEREAS, Mike Schuette will be honored and receive the 2011
10 Volunteer of the Year Award at Catholic Charities USA's Annual
11 Gathering and Poverty Summit, September 18-21, 2011, in Ft.
12 Worth, Texas; therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
14 NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
15 we congratulate Michael Schuette on being named the 2011
16 Volunteer of the Year Award and thank him for his years of
17 service in helping others; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
19 presented to Michael Schuette as a symbol of our respect and
20 esteem.