



HR1306

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of  
3 Representatives are proud to honor our esteemed colleague,  
4 State Representative Karen Yarbrough, and thank her for her  
5 many years of service to the residents of her district and the  
6 people of the State of Illinois; and

7           WHEREAS, Rep. Yarbrough is a native of Washington D.C., but  
8 established herself as a third generation entrepreneur in Cook  
9 County; she earned a degree in business administration from  
10 Chicago State University, a master's degree in inner city  
11 studies at Northeastern Illinois University, and completed a  
12 senior executive government program at Harvard's Kennedy  
13 School of Government; and

14           WHEREAS, Rep. Yarbrough blazed trails in carrying on her  
15 family's tradition of work in the real estate, appraisal and  
16 insurance industry, making great strides as a woman in a then  
17 male-dominated profession; she was the founder and longtime  
18 chief executive officer of Hathaway Insurance, and was driven  
19 to succeed despite those who looked over her shoulder to see if  
20 the man who ran the business was around; she often shares this  
21 anecdote to inspire young women to persevere through adversity;  
22 and

1           WHEREAS, Rep. Yarbrough became State Representative in  
2           2001, and for more than 10 years has been a strong advocate for  
3           social justice and a society that measures itself by how it  
4           cares for its most vulnerable, especially young children, the  
5           disabled, and the elderly; and

6           WHEREAS, Rep. Yarbrough served on numerous committees in  
7           the House of Representatives, including committees on housing,  
8           public safety appropriations, education, public health,  
9           environment, insurance, and the railroad industry, among many  
10          others; she was also selected by her peers to serve as  
11          Assistant Majority Leader; and

12          WHEREAS, Rep. Yarbrough earned a reputation as a  
13          hardworking leader unafraid to fight for what she believes is  
14          right; among the tough issues she tackled was the legislative  
15          effort that made Illinois the first Midwestern state to ban  
16          indoor smoking and protect employees from the health risks of  
17          secondary smoke; and

18          WHEREAS, Public health has long been a priority for Rep.  
19          Yarbrough; she has helped numerous HIV/AIDS prevention and  
20          education organizations and hosts an annual breast cancer  
21          awareness event to bring local women together; and

22          WHEREAS, Rep. Yarbrough believed that Illinois would be a

1 better place if it ended the death penalty, taking up an effort  
2 that had made little progress in 30 years; she worked  
3 tirelessly to help others find the courage to stand for true  
4 justice and made Illinois the 16th state to repeal capital  
5 punishment, earning her a Nobel Peace Prize nomination and an  
6 audience with Pope Benedict XVI in Vatican City; and

7 WHEREAS, Rep. Yarbrough believes that many of society's  
8 problems stem from poverty, and she focused much of her  
9 legislative efforts to eliminate it, helping to create the  
10 Commission on the Elimination of Poverty; and

11 WHEREAS, To help battle violence in Chicago and Cook  
12 County, Rep. Yarbrough was one of the first state officials to  
13 endorse the CeaseFire anti-violence initiative, an effort  
14 using violence interrupters to mediate conflicts before they  
15 turn deadly; when CeaseFire dollars were slashed and violence  
16 started to rise, Yarbrough successfully fought to restore much  
17 State funding; and

18 WHEREAS, Rep. Yarbrough was one of the first legislators to  
19 recognize that predatory mortgage lending practices had a  
20 deleterious effect on communities, especially communities of  
21 color, and fought to crack down on state-chartered banks and  
22 establish a program to track lending and offer mortgage  
23 counseling to potential buyers at risk; and

1           WHEREAS, Rep. Yarbrough helped usher in the first major  
2 statewide capital construction program in Illinois in a decade  
3 to repair the state's crumbling roads, bridges and schools and  
4 create well-paying jobs; she helped to enact strong ethics  
5 reform to restore trust in state government; and

6           WHEREAS, Rep. Yarbrough has received numerous awards  
7 recognizing her efforts to promote social justice, public  
8 health, fair housing, anti-violence, volunteerism and women's  
9 rights, and she proudly mentors young people who seek to become  
10 more involved in their communities; and

11           WHEREAS, Rep. Yarbrough enjoys spending time with her  
12 family, especially her husband, Henderson, who shares her  
13 passion for public service as Mayor of the Village of Maywood;  
14 she is especially proud of her children and grandchildren;  
15 therefore, be it

16           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
17 NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
18 we thank State Representative Karen Yarbrough for her service  
19 to her community and State, and wish her continued success in  
20 her new position as Cook County Recorder and in all her future  
21 endeavors; and be it further

1           RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
2 presented to Rep. Karen Yarbrough as an expression of our  
3 respect and gratitude.