

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, All of Illinois is proud of the service to our
3 country provided by the 173rd Airborne Brigade; and

4 WHEREAS, The Greatest chapter of the Brigade's history
5 began in 1963; the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) was
6 activated on the island of Okinawa on March 26, 1963; the
7 "Sky Soldier" as the nationalist Chinese paratroopers called
8 the 173rd, made thousands of training parachute jumps in a
9 dozen different pacific area countries; the Brigade was the
10 first Army unit sent to the republic of South Vietnam in May
11 1965; and

12 WHEREAS, In the combat operations to follow, the
13 paratroopers made their superb training payoff; in "War Zone
14 D" they destroyed enemy base camps, and they took part in
15 battles such as the iron triangle, Pleiku, and Kontum and
16 many others; they conducted the only major combat parachute
17 jump in the Tay Ninh Area and blocked North Vietnam
18 incursions during the bloodiest fighting of the war at "Dak
19 To" during the summer and fall of 1967, culminating in the
20 capture of "Hill 875"; elements of the Brigade conducted an
21 amphibious assault against North Vietnam and Viet Cong forces
22 as part of an operation to clear the rice growing lowlands
23 along the "Bong Song" Littoral; and

24 WHEREAS, The Troopers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (SEP)
25 wear their combat badges and decorations with pride; during
26 more than six years of nearly continuous combat in Vietnam,
27 the brigade earned 14 campaign streamers and four unit
28 citations, had 13 Medal of Honor winners, had over 130
29 distinguished service crosses winners, and was awarded over
30 6,000 purple hearts; and they conducted the only U.S. combat
31 parachute assault of the Vietnam War; sadly, over 1,534 names
32 of Sky Soldiers who perished are listed on the Vietnam War

1 Memorial in Washington, D.C.; the Brigade was deactivated on
2 14 January 1972 at Fort Campbell, Kentucky; and

3 WHEREAS, On June 9, 2000, the colors of the 173rd were
4 unfurled for the first time over Italian soil in Vicenza,
5 Italy; today the Brigade begins another chapter in its proud
6 history; therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
8 NINETY-SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
9 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we proudly proclaim the week
10 of July 1, 2002 as "173rd Airborne Brigade Week" in the State
11 of Illinois in honor of the gallant soldiers of the 173rd
12 Airborne Brigade; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
14 presented to the 173rd Airborne Brigade as an expression of
15 our esteem.