



HR1054

LRB100 21882 MST 39744 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Douglas Park is a 218-acre park on the West Side of Chicago and is named after U.S. Senator Stephen A. Douglas (1813-1861), a pro-slavery politician from Illinois; he was a proponent of the concept of "popular sovereignty", the idea that those areas of the country where a majority wished to have slavery should be allowed to do so; and

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WHEREAS, Douglas Park borders a neighborhood of African American and Latino residents; and

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WHEREAS, Recently, fifth grade students at the Village Leadership Academy were assigned to persuade commuters to sign a petition to add an "S" to the park's current name, thus renaming it for Frederick Douglass, a former slave and social reformer, abolitionist, orator, writer, and statesman; and

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WHEREAS, To gain public support for the name change, sixth graders from the Village Leadership Academy are meeting with West Side community groups, visiting the North Lawndale neighborhood near the park to gather signatures from area residents, and campaigning on subway platforms and aboard trains; and

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WHEREAS, This assignment encourages students to learn

1 about politics, current events, and how to make positive
2 changes in their communities; and

3 WHEREAS, The next phase of the assignment will be for the
4 students to make a formal presentation to the Chicago Park
5 District, which has the final say on the names of parks;
6 therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
8 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
9 commend the students of the Village Leadership Academy for
10 their efforts to make positive changes within their community;
11 and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That we urge the Chicago Park District to approve
13 changing the name of Douglas Park to Douglass Park in honor of
14 Frederick Douglass; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
16 presented to the students at the Village Leadership Academy and
17 Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners President Jesse H.
18 Ruiz.