

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of this body would like to recognize
3 and honor Marian Byrnes who has distinguished herself in
4 service to her community and this State; and

5 WHEREAS, Marian Byrnes was born in New Albany, Indiana on
6 November 1, 1925; she married Bruce Byrnes, Jr., a veteran of
7 World War II, on April 20, 1946 and had four sons; David,
8 Kevin, Alan, and Brian; and they have three grandchildren,
9 Erin, Joshua, and Morgan; and

10 WHEREAS, Mrs. Byrnes attended Indiana University from
11 1943 to 1945, where she worked part time at the RCA war plant
12 and became a founder of the first student chapter of NAACP;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Mrs. Byrnes received her Divisional M.A. in
15 Social Sciences from the University of Chicago; this was one
16 of the broad spectrum degrees initiated by Robert Hutchins
17 and included, Political Science, Economics, Sociology, and
18 Education; she worked part-time as secretary for Leo Szilard,
19 the "Father of the Atomic Bomb"; and

20 WHEREAS, Mrs. Byrnes became active with the civil rights
21 movement in 1964, and participated in marches until the
22 culminating open housing march of 25,000 to City Hall in
23 1966; she was also a founding member of Breadbasket Teachers,
24 a branch of Operations Breadbasket, the predecessor of
25 Operation PUSH; and

26 WHEREAS, Mrs. Byrnes taught in the Chicago Public School
27 District for 22 years, teaching primary grades, then educable
28 mentally handicapped classes, and finally a resource room for
29 children of all grades with learning disabilities; she was an
30 active member of Chicago Teachers Union (CTU), serving as
31 school delegate to the House of Delegates for 15 years and as

1 a district supervisor in CTU's first strike; she also worked
2 with the Concerned FTB's (full-time basis substitutes) to
3 help them prove discrimination in the Board's process of
4 examinations for teachers to become certified; this issue was
5 resolved by the first strike, when the Teachers Action
6 Caucus, of which Marian was a leader, prevailed on the CTU
7 House of Delegates to make certification based on three
8 years' satisfactory service a non-negotiable demand in the
9 contract negotiations; and

10 WHEREAS, After retiring from the public schools in 1984,
11 she worked for two years as an administrative assistant to
12 the executive director of Protection and Advocacy, an agency
13 which must exist in each state in order for the state to
14 receive its federal funding for people with developmental
15 disabilities and/or mental illness; and

16 WHEREAS, Mrs. Byrnes became a legislative aide to State
17 Representative Clem Balanoff from 1988 to 1991; she was chief
18 organizer for the 32nd District Environmental Task Force,
19 which later became the Southeast Environmental Task Force;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, After retiring from the State Representative's
22 office, she increased her amount of volunteer work; she
23 founded the committee to Protect the Prairie, saving the Van
24 Vlissingen Prairie from development; she was one of the
25 founders of Citizens United to Reclaim the Environment,
26 working to save wetlands and prevent additional landfills in
27 region; she was one of the originators of the 32nd District
28 Environmental Task Force and its successor group, The
29 Southeast Environmental Task Force, leading the fight which
30 closed the malfunctioning Waste Management toxic
31 incinerators, limited landfills, stopped the transport of,
32 and disposal of, unused napalm in the area, monitored
33 pollution, and established Good Neighbor Dialogues with

1 industry; she helped to reclaim the Calumet area Cluster
2 Sites, Hegewisch Marsh and numerous other local wetlands and
3 openlands for cleanup and restoration; she was founder and
4 co-chair of the Lake Calumet Vision Committee, which
5 continues working to restore the ecological value of the lake
6 and its surroundings and develop a feasible plan for the
7 region; and she continues to work with the Calumet
8 Sustainable Growth Advisory Committee, Chicago Recycling
9 Coalition, Calumet Heritage Partnership, Lake Calumet
10 Ecosystem Partnership and numerous other organizations to
11 better the region; and

12 WHEREAS, Mrs. Byrnes has been the recipient of various
13 awards including: the Conservation Leadership Award,
14 Openlands Project; Protector of the Environment/Avocation,
15 Chicago Audubon Society; Environmentalist of the Year, Earth
16 Share of Illinois; Chicago Recycling Coalition; Citizen of
17 the Year, South Chicago Chamber of Commerce; and the Belle
18 Whaley Award (for community activism), Center for
19 Neighborhood Technology; and

20 WHEREAS, Mrs. Byrnes is looking forward to polishing the
21 final drafts of her two unpublished books: "Stumbling Through
22 Wonderland: Notes from a Ghetto School", based on her
23 experiences in the Chicago public schools; and "A Country
24 Girl's Book of Christmas", point-and-counterpoint reflections
25 on incidents from her childhood on the farm and her adult
26 life in the city, focusing on the Christmas season;
27 therefore, be it

28 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
29 NINETY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
30 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we honor and recognize the
31 hard work and dedication of Marian Byrnes to better her
32 community and this State, and we wish her well in all of her
33 future endeavors; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
2 presented to Marian Byrnes as an expression of our respect
3 and esteem.