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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, Chicago resident James "Jamie" Smith III, who was  
3 diagnosed with autism at age four, returned home with four  
4 medals from the 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games held  
5 in Shanghai, China on October 2-11, 2007; and

6           WHEREAS, The Special Olympics World Summer Games bring  
7 together nearly 7,500 athletes from 165 countries to showcase  
8 their athletic abilities; the athletes compete in divisions  
9 according to ability level and are representative of the  
10 athletes in their state or country; and

11           WHEREAS, The mission of the Special Olympics is for people  
12 with special needs to develop physical fitness, to demonstrate  
13 courage, and to experience joy through training and competition  
14 in Olympic-type sports; the Special Olympics began in Illinois  
15 on July 20, 1968, when the first Special Olympics were held at  
16 Soldier Field in Chicago; today, more than 2.25 million  
17 athletes worldwide, ages eight and older, train and compete for  
18 the Special Olympics Games, including 20,000 athletes in  
19 Illinois alone; and

20           WHEREAS, A sixteen year veteran of the Special Olympics,  
21 Jamie Smith competed in powerlifting, athletics, softball,  
22 snowshoeing, basketball, and aquatics through Easter Seals

1 Metropolitan Chicago; and

2 WHEREAS, Jamie Smith began attending the Easter Seals  
3 Metropolitan Chicago Therapeutic Day School shortly after he  
4 was diagnosed with autism as a young child; he earned perfect  
5 attendance awards in high school from 2000 to 2004 while  
6 working part-time at a grocery store, demonstrating his innate  
7 qualities of fortitude and industriousness even at his early  
8 age; in 2004, he was named Athlete of the Year at his school;  
9 and

10 WHEREAS, After Jamie Smith graduated from the Easter Seals  
11 Metropolitan Chicago Therapeutic Day School in 2004, he decided  
12 to give back what he had received, returning to the school to  
13 mentor other needy children while training to qualify for the  
14 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games; and

15 WHEREAS, Jamie Smith was one of eleven athletes chosen from  
16 Illinois and the only Chicago resident named to compete in the  
17 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games as part of the  
18 399-member Team USA, a feat only possible through his intense  
19 training regimen, his natural ability, and his will to succeed;  
20 and

21 WHEREAS, A powerlifter capable of lifting 295 pounds, 110  
22 pounds over his own body weight, Jamie Smith earned four medals

1 at the 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games, with bronze  
2 medal victories in the Squat-Lift and Dead-Lift events and  
3 silver medal victories in the Bench Press event and for  
4 All-Around Performance; and

5 WHEREAS, In a tragic turn of events, Jamie Smith's  
6 weightlifting coach of the past seven years, Easter Seals  
7 Metropolitan Chicago staff member Rob DeSanto, passed away the  
8 night before Jamie's scheduled departure for China; Mr. DeSanto  
9 would have been proud to see the intense dedication exhibited  
10 by Jamie Smith, as well as his extraordinary success in the  
11 2007 Games; and

12 WHEREAS, Jamie Smith's exceptional performance at the 2007  
13 Special Olympics World Summer Games is worthy of the greatest  
14 respect and is indicative of the great things that hard work  
15 and determination can accomplish in our society; he serves as  
16 an inspiration to the participants in the Special Olympics and  
17 the citizens of the State of Illinois; therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
19 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we  
20 honor James "Jamie" Smith III on the occasion of his  
21 outstanding performance at the 2007 Special Olympics World  
22 Summer games held in Shanghai, China and wish him continued  
23 success and happiness in the future; and be it further

1           RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
2 presented to James "Jamie" Smith III as a symbol of our esteem  
3 and respect.