



HR1323

LRB095 21490 GRL 51081 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of  
3 Representatives are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of  
4 our friend and former colleague, Larry McKeon of Springfield,  
5 formerly of Chicago, who passed away on May 13, 2008; and

6           WHEREAS, Larry McKeon was born on June 30, 1944 in Nampa,  
7 Idaho; he received his bachelor's degree in political science  
8 and his master's degree in public administration from  
9 California State University in Los Angeles; he also worked  
10 toward his Ph.D. in social service administration at the  
11 University of Chicago; and

12           WHEREAS, Larry McKeon served our country as a First  
13 Lieutenant in the United States Army Infantry; he also served  
14 as a lieutenant with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's  
15 Department and as a college professor and administrator before  
16 moving to Illinois; prior to becoming a state legislator,  
17 McKeon served as the director of information systems and  
18 services for Metropolitan Family Services and was Mayor Richard  
19 M. Daley's liaison to the LGBT community as the director of the  
20 Chicago Commission on Human Relations' Advisory Council on Gay  
21 and Lesbian Issues; he also taught public administration at  
22 Roosevelt University; and

1           WHEREAS, Larry McKeon is survived by his brothers, Gerald  
2 and Dennis McKeon; he was preceded in death by his longtime  
3 partner, Ray Korzinski, who passed away in 1990; and

4           WHEREAS, Larry McKeon was first elected to the Illinois  
5 House of Representatives in 1996 and served until his  
6 retirement in 2007; he represented the North Side of Chicago's  
7 34th and later 13th districts; he was the State's first openly  
8 gay and HIV-positive legislator; he battled AIDS and cancer  
9 with stoicism, grace, and a strong resolve not to let those  
10 diseases impede his efforts on behalf of the causes in which he  
11 believed, nor interfere with his desire to live a full and  
12 productive life; he considered his biggest achievement as a  
13 legislator his work to add the words "sexual orientation" to  
14 the State's Human Rights Act, which bans discrimination against  
15 people for jobs, housing, public accommodations, and credit;  
16 this milestone, which was achieved in 2005, was the culmination  
17 of 30 years of effort and struggle by thousands of individuals;  
18 and

19           WHEREAS, Larry McKeon thought of himself not as a gay  
20 legislator, but as a legislator who happened to be gay, and was  
21 a passionate and committed advocate on behalf of the powerless,  
22 the vulnerable, and those who too often had no voice in the  
23 legislative process; he worked diligently to expand health care  
24 coverage for the uninsured, improve services for immigrants,

1 bolster outreach and assistance programs for the homeless,  
2 increase workplace safety protections and strengthen workers'  
3 rights, and expand Uptown's Truman College; and

4 WHEREAS, As an Illinois State Representative, Larry McKeon  
5 served on numerous House Committees, including the Labor  
6 Committee as chairman, the Housing and Urban Development  
7 Committee as vice chairman, and the Aging, Executive, and  
8 Developmental Disabilities and Mental Illness Committees; he  
9 also served on the Subcommittee on Agreed Labor Bills as  
10 sub-chairman, the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules, the  
11 Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes, and the  
12 Legislative Ethics Commission; and

13 WHEREAS, After his retirement, Larry McKeon served as a  
14 volunteer lobbyist for the AIDS Foundation of Chicago and could  
15 be seen in the State House several times a week; he also was  
16 the proud owner of a 2002 Winnebago Adventurer motor home that  
17 he took on excursions across the United States, along with his  
18 two rescued greyhounds, Hillary and Squiggy; and

19 WHEREAS, Larry McKeon was greatly admired by his colleagues  
20 and friends for his intellect, sense of humor, easy-going  
21 nature, kindness to others, and courage as a human rights  
22 leader; he was a compassionate soul who was modest about his  
23 important place in Illinois history and who truly strove to

1 make the world a better place; he will be greatly missed but  
2 never forgotten; therefore, be it

3       RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
4 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we  
5 mourn, along with his family, friends, and the people who knew  
6 and respected him across the State of Illinois, the passing of  
7 our friend and colleague Larry McKeon; and be it further

8       RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
9 presented to the family and friends of former State  
10 Representative Larry McKeon as a symbol of our very sincere  
11 sorrow and sympathy for their loss.