



HR1693

LRB095 23300 GRL 54014 r

1

HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are pleased to congratulate Michael S.
4 Thomson, Issues Development Staff Director for the House
5 Democratic Caucus, as he concludes 13 years of service to
6 Illinois House Speaker Michael J. Madigan and the people of our
7 State; and

8 WHEREAS, Mike began his career in 1996 as a Program
9 Specialist on the Speaker's Springfield Issues Development
10 Staff; in 1997, he moved to Coal City to serve in the district
11 office of State Representative Mary K. O'Brien; in 1998, he
12 returned to Springfield to continue his work for the Speaker at
13 the State Capitol; in 1999, he was appointed Issues Development
14 Staff Assistant Director and, in 2003, became the Director; and

15 WHEREAS, During his tenure as Director, Mike has provided
16 excellent counsel to the Speaker and members of the Democratic
17 Caucus; he has ably led his staff in its mission to help
18 Democratic members communicate with their constituents,
19 provide responsive government service, and pass legislation
20 beneficial to their districts; on session days he has done
21 yeoman's work in helping to manage the flow of legislation in
22 committees and leading a team of fellow staff members to do the
23 same on the House floor; throughout his tenure he has

1 spearheaded multiple successful efforts to bring government to
2 the people via regional forums and town hall meetings on
3 legislation and public policy topics of Statewide
4 significance; and

5 WHEREAS, Mike has played a key role in helping to pass
6 legislation to improve the lives of his fellow Illinoisans,
7 including measures to provide electric rate relief, increase
8 the minimum wage, expand health care access to the uninsured,
9 revise the State's telecommunications laws, modernize the
10 workers' compensation system, and strengthen ethics and
11 elections statutes; and

12 WHEREAS, Mike displays all the qualities that one hopes for
13 in a leader; known for his organizational skills and interest
14 in keeping everything in its rightful place, he manages the
15 details while never losing sight of the big picture; he has
16 served as a mentor to young staff members and takes
17 satisfaction in the success of his colleagues; he would never
18 ask anyone to do something he has not done or was unprepared to
19 do himself; he truly believes that the buck stops with him; he
20 has maintained an open-door policy with his staff, an offer
21 which many were happy to take up as need arose; although hardly
22 a "soft-touch", his insistence on accountability was tempered
23 by compassion shown to those who occasionally fell short of the
24 expectations placed upon them; a signature phrase of his, "no

1 pride of authorship", illustrates his preference that the
2 interests of the greater good always come before individual
3 distinction; and

4 WHEREAS, Mike served as Issues Staff Director at one of the
5 most difficult and challenging times in our State's history;
6 although the easy course would have been simply to acquiesce
7 and urge that a go-along-to-get-along approach to governance be
8 adopted, he stood firmly with, and gladly helped to fight the
9 battles of, Speaker Madigan and the House Democratic Caucus in
10 their steadfast resistance to those who would trample upon the
11 Illinois Constitution, disregard our laws or attempt to usurp
12 the lawful prerogatives of the legislative branch; in so doing,
13 demonstration was given that there are still many public
14 servants who are willing to put the best interests of the State
15 ahead of narrow partisan concerns; and

16 WHEREAS, In addition to his work as a member of the
17 Speaker's legislative staff, Mike is also a veteran of many
18 hard-fought political campaigns; after getting his start as a
19 volunteer for former President Bill Clinton in 1992, Mike went
20 on to play important roles in many Statewide, legislative,
21 judicial, and municipal campaigns; among his many
22 accomplishments in this arena, he was a key member of the team
23 that helped to engineer the upset win of Supreme Court Justice
24 Tom Kilbride in 2000; and

1 WHEREAS, Mike also served as the Political Director of the
2 Democratic Party of Illinois from 2003 to 2008; in that
3 capacity, he led the staff through three primary and three
4 general election campaigns, preserving the House Democratic
5 majorities in each election; while many in the world of
6 political campaigns have their particular talents, Mike is the
7 consummate multi-role player - from candidate recruitment, to
8 message development, to television and radio script writing, to
9 media planning, to field organizing, to Get Out the Vote
10 tactics on Election Day - he is the rare individual that does
11 them all and does them well; and

12 WHEREAS, Despite his achievements, humility and an acute
13 awareness of his good fortune remain central to Mike's
14 exceptional character; an incredible work ethic, commitment to
15 excellence in all things, first-rate mind, strategic and
16 tactical brilliance, rapier wit, superb temperament, and
17 loyalty to his friends are all qualities of this decent and
18 honorable man; he is regarded by all that know him as a
19 class-act and every bit a person of his word; and

20 WHEREAS, While justly proud of his many professional
21 accomplishments, in Mike's eyes they pale in comparison to the
22 pride he feels in his family; he is the devoted husband of
23 Rachael, his high school sweetheart and extraordinarily

1 understanding, patient, and supportive wife who has been with
2 him every step of the way; they were married on October 19,
3 1996; they are the loving and doting parents of Ellie McKeefery
4 Thomson, age 8, and Matthew John Thomson, age 6; among his many
5 ambitions for his post-staff life is to spend as much time as
6 possible watching and helping them to grow up; and

7 WHEREAS, Although ever the consummate professional, Mike
8 understands that life is more than work; he bleeds orange and
9 blue and takes a backseat to none when it comes to his devotion
10 to the Fighting Illini basketball; he also enjoys cheering for
11 the U of I football team; as irrefutable proof that he is an
12 optimist at heart, this man of otherwise reserved bearing wears
13 his feelings on his sleeve when it comes to rooting for his
14 beloved Chicago Cubs; and

15 WHEREAS, Mike is a proud son of Illinois; he was born in
16 Princeton, Illinois on April 13, 1971 to parents John and Carol
17 Thomson; he is the brother of Paula Lough of Ohio, Illinois and
18 Jim Thomson of Richmond, Virginia; Mike grew up in Princeton,
19 graduated from Princeton High School in 1989, and went on to
20 earn his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees in
21 Political Science from Western Illinois University in 1993 and
22 1995; and

23 WHEREAS, Mike is a great friend to many across Illinois; he

1 is sure to remain engaged in civic life and make equally
2 noteworthy contributions to the betterment of our State;
3 therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
5 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
6 congratulate Michael S. Thomson on his many years of hard work
7 as a valuable member of House Speaker Michael J. Madigan's
8 staff and wish him the best in his future endeavors; and be it
9 further

10 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
11 presented to Michael S. Thomson as a symbol of our sincere
12 respect and admiration for his service and accomplishments.