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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The "With Wings and a Halo - R.E.A.C.H. a Child" program was created to reach out to children across Illinois that find themselves in a crisis situation, whether they are being treated in a Children's Hospital, a domestic violence situation, an automobile accident, or are temporarily homeless or in distress; and

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WHEREAS, The mission of R.E.A.C.H. (Reading Enjoyment Affects Childhood Happiness) a Child is "to put a smile on the face of a child in a time of need" through the gift of a book; the program has been a big success in Illinois, with R.E.A.C.H. a Child delivering over 60,000 books nationally in the last 14 months, including 2,200 B.A.C.K. (Become A Cheerful Kid) packets filled with 10 to 12 books each, to the Illinois State Police; and

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WHEREAS, The signature red backpacks of the R.E.A.C.H. a Child program are in 4,000 - 5,000 squad cars and ambulances throughout Illinois; the backpacks are found in Cook, McHenry, Lake, Kane, DuPage, LaSalle, Sangamon, and Will Counties, as well as the entire State Police fleet of squad cars; and

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WHEREAS, Over 45,000 children's books have been donated to children in crisis situations with the help of these first

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1 responders, police officers, Sheriff's offices, and State
2 patrol officers; over 7,500 squad cars and EMS ambulances in
3 Illinois are waiting to get involved in this "B.A.C.K. Packets"
4 program as well; and

5 WHEREAS, The R.E.A.C.H. a Child program allows first
6 responders to build better relationships with the community
7 youth, help children at their most vulnerable moment in a
8 crisis situation, and promote literacy and crime prevention;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, There is a tremendous need for more investment and
11 support for the R.E.A.C.H a Child program; the program survives
12 solely on financial donations, in-kind donations, and
13 volunteers to continue to provide the B.A.C.K. Packet program
14 to the various police, fire, and emergency service vehicles;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, Demand for the R.E.A.C.H a Child program is
17 growing rapidly at the State and national level; therefore, be
18 it

19 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL
20 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
21 CONCURRING HEREIN, that we applaud the extensive efforts of the
22 "With Wings and A Halo - R.E.A.C.H. a Child" program in the

1 State of Illinois and support efforts to expand the program
2 further; and we declare June 27, 2009 to be "With Wings and A
3 Halo-R.E.A.C.H. a Child Day in the State of Illinois; and be it
4 further

5 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
6 presented to the national and Illinois chapters of the With
7 Wings and a Halo Organization.