



HR0679

LRB104 20769 ECR 34275 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives wish to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Marquette Park March in Chicago; and

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WHEREAS, August 5, 2026 marks the 60th anniversary of the historic 1966 march through Marquette Park, a pivotal chapter in the civil rights movement and the Chicago Freedom Movement led by Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Albert Raby; and

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WHEREAS, Working with a coalition of civil rights organizations known as the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations (CCCO), educator and activist Albert Raby invited Dr. King to move to Chicago to help launch the Chicago Freedom Movement, a campaign to expand the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's (SCLC) civil rights activities from the South to northern cities; and

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WHEREAS, Groundwork for the Chicago Freedom Movement began in the summer of 1965 when Dr. King was invited by civil rights activists to Chicago to help lead a demonstration against de facto segregation in education, housing, and employment; and

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WHEREAS, In consultation with the SCLC, the CCCO decided this campaign should be geared specifically at achieving fair

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1 housing practices; and

2 WHEREAS, In January 1966, Dr. King moved into a
3 third-floor apartment in the North Lawndale neighborhood of
4 Chicago's West Side to draw international attention to the
5 systemic disinvestment facing Northern urban centers,
6 including shabby and dilapidated housing; and

7 WHEREAS, Throughout the spring and summer of 1966, Dr.
8 King helped the campaign gain momentum through demonstrations
9 and marches, even as he faced the organizational challenges of
10 mobilizing Chicago's diverse African American community; and

11 WHEREAS, On July 10, 1966, over 30,000 people braved a
12 98-degree heat wave at Soldier Field to hear Dr. King declare
13 that the movement was "tired of being lynched spiritually and
14 economically in the North"; and

15 WHEREAS, On August 5, 1966, Dr. King led hundreds of
16 demonstrators into the Marquette Park area to protest
17 discriminatory real estate practices and to demand the right
18 for African Americans to rent, own, and sell property on a
19 nondiscriminatory basis; and

20 WHEREAS, The marchers were met by a mob of approximately
21 700 counter-protesters, who shouted racist slurs and hateful

1 slogans while attacking marchers, legal observers, and police
2 officers with a torrent of bricks, bottles, and rocks,
3 including one of which that struck Dr. King and knocked him to
4 one knee; and

5 WHEREAS, Dr. King stated after the attack, "I have never
6 seen, even in Mississippi and Alabama, mobs as hostile and as
7 hate-filled as I've seen here in Chicago"; and

8 WHEREAS, The courage displayed by these marchers led to a
9 summit agreement with Mayor Richard J. Daley and real estate
10 leaders, which Dr. King called "the most significant program
11 ever conceived to make open housing a reality", eventually
12 paving the way for the passage and enactment of the federal
13 Fair Housing Act of 1968; and

14 WHEREAS, The seeds sown in Marquette Park contributed to
15 the eventual election of Chicago's first Black mayor, Harold
16 Washington, whose campaign was managed by Al Raby, in 1983 and
17 to the election of Barack Obama as the first Black president of
18 the United States in 2008 after he was inspired to move to
19 Chicago by Harold Washington's election; and

20 WHEREAS, The legacy of the Chicago Freedom Movement lives
21 on through the Martin Luther King, Jr. Living Memorial in
22 Marquette Park; therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
2 HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
3 we commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Marquette Park
4 March, and we honor the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
5 and Albert Raby; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That we reaffirm our commitment to continuing
7 the fight for fair housing and economic justice for all
8 Illinoisans.