



SR0232

LRB104 13178 MST 25322 r

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The National Association of the Deaf recognizes  
3 April as Deaf History Month to increase awareness of and  
4 express appreciation for the many contributions that deaf and  
5 hard-of-hearing individuals have made to our society; and

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WHEREAS, According to U.S. Census Bureau estimates, over  
7 400,000 individuals in Illinois are deaf or hard of hearing;  
8 and

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WHEREAS, Deaf culture is an important part of the fabric  
10 of our society; and

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WHEREAS, Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals have made  
12 and continue to make numerous contributions to their local  
13 communities, the state, and the United States; and

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WHEREAS, The American School for the Deaf opened in  
15 Hartford, Connecticut on April 15, 1817 as the first public  
16 school for the deaf in the United States; and

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WHEREAS, Inspired by meeting an educated deaf man, State  
18 Senator Orville H. Browning introduced and championed the  
19 passage of a bill in 1839 to create what would become the  
20 Illinois School for the Deaf, which opened its doors to

1 students in January of 1846 in Jacksonville, where it proudly  
2 remains located to this day; and

3 WHEREAS, In April of 1864, President Abraham Lincoln, who  
4 as a state legislator in Illinois supported the creation of  
5 the Illinois School for the Deaf, signed a charter  
6 establishing Gallaudet University, the first college in the  
7 world for deaf students, named in honor of Thomas Hopkins  
8 Gallaudet, who acted as an informal advisor to the first board  
9 members of the Illinois School for the Deaf; therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL  
11 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we declare April 2025  
12 and April 2026 as Deaf History Month in the State of Illinois  
13 and encourage Illinoisans to become familiar with and  
14 celebrate the contributions of deaf Illinoisans to our state  
15 and nation; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
17 provided to the Illinois Association of the Deaf, the Illinois  
18 Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission, and the Illinois School  
19 for the Deaf as a symbol of our respect and esteem.