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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The State of Illinois is often regarded as having two distinct regions, the urban Cook County area and downstate Illinois; and

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WHEREAS, Even communities north of Chicago are considered "downstate" because their needs, interests, economies, and cultures have more in common with rural southern and central Illinois counties than they do with urban Cook County; and

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WHEREAS, The majority of residents in downstate Illinois disagree with urban Cook County on key policy issues; for example, 61 outstate Illinois counties, from the Wisconsin state line to the Kentucky state line, have approved resolutions to become sanctuary counties for gun owners, while the City of Chicago has some of the strictest gun laws in the country; and

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WHEREAS, The divide between urban Cook County and the rest of Illinois is frequently manifested in electoral results such as the 2010 gubernatorial election in which the winning candidate carried only four out of 102 counties and, in fact, did not need to carry any other counties to win because of the margin of victory in urban Cook County; and

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1 WHEREAS, The U.S. Supreme Court ruling Reynolds v. Sims
2 (1964) removed the geographic element from districting for the
3 state legislature, and, as Illinois' U.S. Senator Everett
4 Dirksen warned, this caused power to be concentrated in
5 Chicago and resulted in rural areas losing their voice in
6 state government; and

7 WHEREAS, Article IV Section 4 of the U.S. Constitution
8 guarantees a republican form of government, but the people of
9 rural, small town and suburban outstate Illinois do not
10 experience this; and

11 WHEREAS, This concentration of power in Illinois' largest
12 urban area opened the door to extreme gerrymandering and
13 further decreased the voice of outstate Illinoisans;
14 gerrymandering has enabled one county, with 40% of the state
15 population, to dominate the other 60%; and

16 WHEREAS, Article IV, Section 3(a) of the Illinois
17 Constitution requires districts to be compact; both state and
18 federal districts have shapes resembling snakes, dinosaurs,
19 gloves, jaws, and a pipe wrench; this includes the " earmuffs"
20 district, which The Economist called one of the "most
21 strangely drawn and gerrymandered congressional districts in
22 the country"; and

1 WHEREAS, Article I, Section 1 of the Illinois Constitution
2 Bill of Rights declares that all men are by nature free and
3 independent and have certain inherent and inalienable rights
4 among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;
5 to secure these rights and the protection of property,
6 governments are instituted among men, deriving their just
7 powers from the consent of the governed; and

8 WHEREAS, The lack of representative government has
9 decreased accountability, has allowed corruption to flourish,
10 and has led to Illinois being rated the third most corrupt
11 state and Chicago the most corrupt city in the nation; and

12 WHEREAS, This has led to the government of Illinois having
13 the worst financial health of all 50 states, while giving the
14 people of Illinois the greatest collective state and local tax
15 burden of all 50 states, and because the General Assembly is
16 dominated by one county, the people of downstate Illinois have
17 experienced legislation, taxation, and regulation without
18 representation; and

19 WHEREAS, Amendment XIV of the U.S. Constitution guarantees
20 equal protection under the laws; and

21 WHEREAS, The City of Chicago is frequently treated as a
22 separate region of the State and has often been exempted from

1 major legislative initiatives the General Assembly enacts into
2 law because of this fact; and

3 WHEREAS, The divide between rural, small town, and
4 suburban Illinois and the City of Chicago spans the 200-year
5 history of the State, and there have been several attempts in
6 the past to split Illinois into two states; and

7 WHEREAS, The City of Chicago passed a resolution in 1925
8 to form the State of Chicago; and

9 WHEREAS, In 1971, West Central Illinoisans declared their
10 region the "Republic of Forgottonia"; and

11 WHEREAS, In 1981, Democrat State Senator Howard Carroll of
12 Chicago passed a Cook County state split bill through both
13 chambers of the legislature; and

14 WHEREAS, Organizations, such as New Illinois, Illinois
15 Separation, and The State of Southern Illinois, continue
16 pushing for the formation of a new state truly representing
17 the rural, small town, and suburban residents of Illinois; and

18 WHEREAS, In 2020, an advisory referendum for the creation
19 of a new state appeared on the ballots in 22 counties and, in
20 each county, won by a landslide of 70-80%; and

1 WHEREAS, Article IV, Section 3 of the Constitution of the
2 United States provides in part: "New States may be admitted by
3 Congress into this Union; but no new State shall be formed or
4 erected within the Jurisdiction of any other state; nor any
5 State be formed by the Junction of two or more States, or Parts
6 of States, without the consent of the Legislatures of the
7 States concerned as well as of the Congress"; four states in
8 the Union have been formed by this process, most recently West
9 Virginia; therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
11 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
12 we urge the United States Congress to take action to declare
13 the 101 counties of outstate Illinois, along with outlying
14 areas of Cook County wishing to be included, the 51st state of
15 the United States of America and separate it from the rest of
16 Illinois; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
18 delivered to all Illinois constitutional officers, the Speaker
19 and Minority Leader of the Illinois House of Representatives,
20 and the President and Minority Leader of the Illinois Senate.