



1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, President Abraham Lincoln advanced a proposal in
3 the closing weeks of 1861 for federal support for gradual,
4 compensated emancipation, through action of the legislatures
5 of the border states, but which failed due to lack of
6 sufficient support in those states; and

7 WHEREAS, On July 22, 1862, at a cabinet meeting, President
8 Lincoln announced that, on the basis of his power as Commander
9 in Chief, he proposed to issue a proclamation freeing all
10 slaves in Confederate held territory as of January 1, 1863, if
11 the rebels did not rejoin the Union by that date, with or
12 without the consent of his cabinet; however, he agreed to put a
13 hold on issuing the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation
14 until Union forces had won a significant battle, which the
15 federal forces did at Antietam, Maryland, on September 17,
16 1862, the bloodiest single day of the Civil War; and

17 WHEREAS, President Lincoln then issued, on September 22,
18 1862, the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, and on
19 December 29, 1862, he presented the final draft of the
20 Emancipation Proclamation to his cabinet; and

21 WHEREAS, President Lincoln later became convinced of the
22 need for a constitutional amendment banning slavery to assure
23 that emancipation remained secure after the conclusion of the
24 war, which led to the introduction in the United States Senate
25 of the Thirteenth Amendment outlawing slavery; and

26 WHEREAS, The full meaning of the Emancipation Proclamation
27 emerged when, on April 8, 1864, the United States Senate passed
28 the Thirteenth Amendment outlawing slavery; it failed,
29 initially, to get the required two-thirds majority in the
30 United States House of Representatives, due to the obstruction
31 of Democrats, but public pressure forced enough Democrats to

1 change their votes, so that the House ratified the amendment on
2 January 31, 1865; and

3 WHEREAS, Several months after President Lincoln's
4 assassination, the Thirteen Amendment, outlawing slavery, was
5 declared adopted on December 18, 1865, when it had been
6 ratified by the legislatures of 27 of the then 36 states; and

7 WHEREAS, The Illinois General Assembly wishes to adopt this
8 resolution as an acknowledgement of the significance of Abraham
9 Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation to our nation and the
10 world; and

11 WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln lived in Illinois throughout his
12 adult life, except while serving our nation as its 16th
13 President; and

14 WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln served the State of Illinois
15 through four terms in the Illinois House of Representatives and
16 one term in the United States House of Representatives; and

17 WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln helped found the Illinois
18 Republican Party and twice ran for a seat in the United States
19 Senate; and

20 WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln was twice elected as President of
21 the United States and served our nation in that capacity from
22 March 4, 1861, until his death, as the result of assassination,
23 on April 15, 1865; and

24 WHEREAS, The Emancipation Proclamation led to the freedom
25 of four million slaves, the subsequent broadening of the right
26 to vote to more Americans, and advanced the cause of human
27 rights in the world; and

28 WHEREAS, On January 1, 1863, President Lincoln signed the

1 final, corrected version of the Emancipation Proclamation; and

2 WHEREAS, The Emancipation Proclamation changed the dynamic
3 of the war by turning the federal armies into agents of
4 liberation and by giving slaves a direct and vital interest in
5 the defeat of the Confederate States; and

6 WHEREAS, Emancipation enormously raised the stature of the
7 Union cause internationally; by turning the Civil War into a
8 war against slavery, President Lincoln attracted to the Union's
9 side workers and progressive-minded people all over the world;
10 it greatly complicated the position of those governments, such
11 as that in Great Britain, that were considering intervention on
12 the side of the Confederacy; and

13 WHEREAS, The Emancipation Proclamation managed to
14 destabilize slavery even where it still technically remained
15 legal; in Missouri and Tennessee, areas exempted from the
16 Emancipation Proclamation, slaves deserted plantations en
17 masse; and

18 WHEREAS, Slavery was further undermined by President
19 Lincoln's decision, spelled out in the Emancipation
20 Proclamation, to recruit black soldiers into the Union army;
21 the Union eventually recruited 200,000 African Americans, who
22 served on many fronts; and

23 WHEREAS, The Emancipation Proclamation laid the basis for
24 the Union victory in 1865 and led to the ratification of the
25 Thirteenth Amendment outlawing slavery as a socio-political
26 system; therefore, be it

27 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
28 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
29 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that the first week of January in
30 2007 shall be known as Emancipation Proclamation Week to

1 recognize the enormous importance of the Emancipation
2 Proclamation authored by Illinois' Abraham Lincoln, then
3 President of the United States, and signed into effect on
4 January 1, 1863; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That schools and other institutions in our State
6 are encouraged to celebrate the Emancipation Proclamation and
7 educate our young people about its historical significance.