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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, Reverend William H. Copeland, Jr., will be honored  
3 at a celebration of his 34 years of service to Morning Star  
4 Missionary Baptist Church in Kankakee during the weekend of  
5 Friday, March 10-12, 2006; and

6           WHEREAS, Reverend Copeland was born in Winn Parish,  
7 Louisiana, to Georgia Ann and William H. Copeland, Sr.; he  
8 completed high school in Louisiana and then earned a Bachelor  
9 of Science degree from Missouri Western University in St.  
10 Joseph, Missouri; he also attended National College in Kansas  
11 City, Missouri, and the University of Missouri at Kansas City;  
12 he received theological training from Western Baptist Bible  
13 College, Kansas City National College, and William Jewel  
14 College; he holds an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity degree from  
15 Morris College and McKinley Theological Seminary; and

16           WHEREAS, He was called to pastor Morning Star Missionary  
17 Baptist Church in 1971, and since then he has consistently  
18 shown his concern for the souls and spiritual well-being of  
19 mankind and for the social conditions that people face daily;  
20 he has been a leader in the fight against racism and injustice  
21 and has battled for the right of every child to have equal  
22 access to a quality education; he has organized marches against  
23 gangs and violence and helped to create the Martin Luther King  
24 Jr. Foundation; and

25           WHEREAS, Under his leadership, the church erected a  
26 half-million dollar edifice in 1976 with the mortgage being  
27 fully satisfied in 1986; the church purchased and renovated  
28 what now serves as the Morning Star Community Center;  
29 additionally, the ministries of Morning Star have grown  
30 tremendously, and the church is currently recognized as a  
31 positive, influential social and political icon in the  
32 Kankakeeland community; and

1           WHEREAS, He is active in many civic and community  
2 organizations and has served as president of the NAACP and the  
3 Northeastside Ministerial Alliance; he has also served as  
4 coordinator of the Kankakee County chapter of the Rainbow PUSH  
5 Coalition and was one of six pastors to receive the Founder's  
6 Award from PUSH, one of the organizations highest awards; and

7           WHEREAS, Reverend Copeland has been the recipient of  
8 numerous awards, including the Ebony Esteem Award for "Man of  
9 the Year" and "Most Outstanding Man in Religion" for Kankakee  
10 County; he was named "Minister of the Year" by the Midwestern  
11 Illinois Laymen's Fellowship and has received many other  
12 recognitions, and on February 26, 2006, he received "The  
13 African American Heritage Honoree Award" from the Victory  
14 Christian International Ministries; and

15           WHEREAS, Reverend Copeland is married to the former Leola  
16 Coley; they are the parents of Reverend Kenneth Edward Copeland  
17 (Starla) and Monica Rochelle (Reverend John W. Fountain) and  
18 the grandparents of William Jibri, Imani Monique, Abeni  
19 Jamilah, Titus Omari, and Malik Jamal; therefore, be it

20           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
21 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
22 we congratulate Reverend William H. Copeland, Jr., on the  
23 occasion of the celebration of 34 years of service to Morning  
24 Star Missionary Baptist Church in Kankakee; and be it further

25           RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
26 presented to Reverend Copeland as an expression of our esteem.