



HR0134

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are pleased to congratulate and thank our
4 longtime friend and colleague, Illinois State Senator Frank
5 Watson, on his retirement from the Illinois Senate; and

6 WHEREAS, Frank Watson's political career began when he was
7 elected to the office of Bond County Central Township
8 supervisor and trustee; in 1979 he was elected to serve in the
9 Illinois House of Representatives and served until 1983, when
10 he was elected the 55th District Senator; he served the 55th
11 district from 1983 through 2003 when legislative redistricting
12 gave him a new district territory, the 51st District, and he
13 was elected to served that district; he served as the Assistant
14 Majority Leader from 1993 to 2002 and Senate Republican leader
15 from 2003 until late in 2008; and

16 WHEREAS, As a State legislator, Frank Watson championed
17 economic development issues that helped bring new businesses to
18 Illinois and to help other businesses expand; he was the
19 sponsor of the EDGE (Economic Development for a Growing
20 Economy) program; EDGE provides tax credits that allow a
21 company to reduce the costs of doing business in Illinois,
22 which levels the field between Illinois and surrounding states
23 that were offering various tax breaks that put Illinois at a

1 disadvantage; and

2 WHEREAS, Another major accomplishment that could have a
3 long-lasting impact on Illinois is his work to promote Illinois
4 coal; he sponsored legislation to help coal companies keep
5 operating, and for industry incentives to encourage more energy
6 generating capacity, using the rich coal reserves in southern
7 Illinois; he recently co-sponsored legislation for the \$2.5
8 billion coal-to-energy Tenaska facility near Taylorville, and
9 fought behind the scenes to help clear hurdles so the bill
10 could be signed into law; the plant is expected to create about
11 1,500 temporary construction jobs and 200 permanent plant jobs,
12 and provide opportunities for hundreds of coal mining jobs
13 around the State; and

14 WHEREAS, He has sponsored school reform measures to improve
15 the quality of public education in the State; he has led the
16 way for more funding for public education; and he has sponsored
17 college tuition programs; and

18 WHEREAS, Senator Watson is a graduate of Purdue University,
19 majoring in Pharmacology; he is a registered pharmacist and was
20 the owner of Watson's Drug Store in Greenville until recently;
21 Senator Watson was at the forefront on the issue of affordable
22 prescription drugs; another priority was a quality
23 transportation system critical for future development and job

1 creation; he used his position on the Senate Transportation
2 Committee to fight for those projects, and was especially a
3 strong advocate for the U.S. Route 51 expansion and
4 improvements; and

5 WHEREAS, Senator Watson teamed with local officials to lead
6 the fight to thwart the attempted closure of the Vandalia
7 Correctional Center; he helped organize the opposition,
8 lobbied fellow senators and took on the governor to keep the
9 prison operating; and

10 WHEREAS, Senator Watson is a member of the Greenville
11 Jaycees; he is a member of the Greenville, O'Fallon, Salem,
12 Decatur, Mt. Zion, Sullivan, and Centralia Chambers of
13 Commerce; and he is a member of the Illinois Retail Merchants
14 Association; and

15 WHEREAS, Frank Watson and his wife, Susan, reside in
16 Greenville; they have two adult children and one grandchild;
17 therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
19 NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
20 congratulate Senator Frank Watson on his retirement and wish
21 him nothing but the best in all his future endeavors; and be it
22 further

1 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
2 presented to former Illinois Senator Frank Watson as a symbol
3 of our sincere respect and admiration.