



HR0716

LRB097 19109 GRL 64349 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Edward Joseph "Ed" Derwinski was a son of
3 Illinois, having been born in Chicago on September 15, 1926;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, As a member of the "Greatest Generation", Ed
6 Derwinski served his country in World War II, assigned to duty
7 on the Pacific front; after the surrender of Japan aboard the
8 "U.S.S. Missouri", he continued his time in uniform during the
9 occupation of Japan; and

10 WHEREAS, In his return to civilian life after World War II,
11 Ed Derwinski was a real-life counterpart of George Bailey in
12 the 1946 classic movie, "It's a Wonderful Life"; after the
13 death of his father, Ed led his brothers to carry on the family
14 building and loan, West Pullman Savings and Loan, a community
15 savings institution; and

16 WHEREAS, After completing his education at Loyola
17 University, Ed Derwinski joined the Illinois House of
18 Representatives as an elected member of the 70th General
19 Assembly (1957-58) representing the 24th Legislative District;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, In the 1958 general election, Ed Derwinski ran for

1 and was elected by his fellow Illinoisans to the United States
2 House of Representatives, representing the 4th Congressional
3 District; as a congressman, he served the State of Illinois and
4 the people of the United States for 24 years, from 1959 until
5 1993; and

6 WHEREAS, As a congressman, Ed Derwinski specialized in
7 foreign affairs, becoming a ranking member of the House Foreign
8 Affairs Committee; in this role, he fought tirelessly to keep
9 the hope of freedom alive in the countries then trapped behind
10 the Iron Curtain; he was repeatedly honored by his fellow
11 Polish-Americans for his advocacy on behalf of the people of
12 Poland, as well as the other sovereign nations of Central and
13 Eastern Europe that, at that time, groaned under the heel of
14 Soviet and Yugoslavian communist occupation; and

15 WHEREAS, After leaving the U.S. House at the end of the
16 97th Congress, Ed Derwinski joined the Reagan Administration in
17 a variety of roles, including Under Secretary of State for
18 Security Assistance, where he oversaw Ronald Reagan's
19 military-aid program as the Soviet empire approached its
20 collapse; and

21 WHEREAS, When the U.S. Veterans Administration was
22 elevated to Cabinet status in March of 1989, newly-elected
23 President George H.W. Bush appointed Under Secretary Ed

1 Derwinski to be the nation's first Secretary of the Department
2 of Veterans Affairs (USDVA), giving this son of Chicago a seat
3 at the White House cabinet table; and

4 WHEREAS, Ed Derwinski served as USDVA Secretary from March
5 15, 1989, until September 26, 1992; this period saw not only
6 the culmination of his lifelong fight to tear down the Berlin
7 Wall and bring freedom to Poland and other countries of the
8 Soviet empire, but also the significant expansion of his
9 Department as it took on new responsibilities associated with
10 the aging of his fellow World War II veterans and growth in the
11 health-care and other benefits that his country would provide
12 to armed forces veterans of the Cold War and beyond; and

13 WHEREAS, After conclusion of his federal service in 1992,
14 Ed Derwinski returned to the Chicago area to live in
15 retirement, enjoying the companionship of his second wife,
16 Bonita "Bonnie" Derwinski, his daughter, Maureen Quattrocki,
17 his son, Michael Derwinski, his step-daughter, Maggie Hickey,
18 and his step-son, Kevin Hickey; and

19 WHEREAS, After a life spent fruitfully and triumphantly in
20 the service of his country, Illinois State Representative, U.S.
21 Representative, and Secretary Ed Derwinski passed away on
22 January 15, 2012; therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
2 NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
3 we mourn the death of our friend and colleague, Edward J. "Ed"
4 Derwinski, and salute his impeccable record of service to this
5 nation; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That we pledge to continue to remember and
7 cherish in our hearts the time in uniform spent by all of our
8 American veterans; our country is what it is because of these
9 men and women; Ed was their leader for a time, but all of them,
10 together, are our leaders; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
12 presented to the wife of this great patriot, Bonita "Bonnie"
13 Derwinski, his daughter, Maureen Quattrocki, his son, Michael
14 Derwinski, his step-daughter, Maggie Hickey, and his step-son,
15 Kevin Hickey.