



HJ0020

LRB098 09279 MST 39419 r

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Mary Ann Bickerdyke also known as Mother  
3 Bickerdyke was born July 19, 1817, in Knox County, Ohio; she  
4 attended Oberlin College and later received training as a nurse  
5 in a Cincinnati hospital where she worked for several years;  
6 and

7 WHEREAS, In 1847, she married Robert Bickerdyke and 9 years  
8 later, with their 2 small sons, the couple moved to Galesburg,  
9 Illinois; Robert Bickerdyke died shortly afterward; and

10 WHEREAS, During the Civil War, Mother Bickerdyke  
11 volunteered her considerable medical skills to help the  
12 hundreds of men who were dying, not from battle, but from  
13 typhoid, dysentery, and other diseases; she helped establish  
14 the hospital in Cairo, Illinois; and

15 WHEREAS, Throughout the war she continued to perform  
16 valuable service for the Union Army; traveling with the Army of  
17 Tennessee, she was present at 19 battles, including Shiloh and  
18 Sherman's March to the Sea; during this time, she worked not  
19 only as a nurse, but she also set up dietary kitchens and  
20 established laundry services, all the while she continued her  
21 fight to improve Army life for the enlisted men; and

1           WHEREAS, Mother Bickerdyke once argued with General  
2 William T. Sherman, refusing to leave the battlefield until he  
3 turned to another officer and exclaimed "She outranks me. I  
4 can't do a thing in the world.", and by the end of the war she  
5 had helped provide 300 hospitals for the wounded and sick; and

6           WHEREAS, Mother Bickerdyke was so greatly admired by  
7 General William Sherman, that he asked her to ride beside him  
8 as soldiers marched through Washington, D.C. after the war had  
9 ended; and

10           WHEREAS, After the war, she worked for the Salvation Army  
11 in San Francisco; she became an attorney dedicated to helping  
12 Civil War veterans with legal issues; she died peacefully on  
13 November 8, 1901; and

14           WHEREAS, A statue of her was erected in Galesburg and a  
15 hospital boat and a liberty ship, the SS Mary Bickerdyke, were  
16 named in her honor; and

17           WHEREAS, Mother Mary Ann Bickerdyke represents the  
18 sacrifices and contributions made by military and civilian  
19 nurses throughout the United States; therefore, be it

20           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
21 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE

1 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that the Wednesday in May during  
2 Illinois Nurses week be designated as Mother Mary Ann  
3 Bickerdyke Day to honor the contributions of Mother Bickerdyke,  
4 military nurses, and all nurses in the State of Illinois; and  
5 be it further

6 RESOLVED, That we urge the citizens of this State to take  
7 cognizance of this event and to participate fittingly in its  
8 observance; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
10 presented to the Illinois Nurses Association as an expression  
11 of our esteem and respect.