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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The National Day of Silence is a day in which
3 students take a vow of silence to bring attention to the
4 anti-lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender name-calling,
5 bullying, and harassment faced by individuals in schools; and

6 WHEREAS, The Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network
7 designates the third Friday of every April as the National Day
8 of Silence; and

9 WHEREAS, Hundreds of thousands of students at more than
10 8,000 schools have participated in the National Day of Silence
11 in past years; and

12 WHEREAS, The Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education
13 Network's 2011 National School Climate Survey illustrates the
14 pervasive harassment and victimization faced by lesbian, gay,
15 bisexual, and transgender students by documenting their
16 experiences within the preceding academic year; and

17 WHEREAS, Nearly 82% of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and
18 transgender students reported being verbally harassed by their
19 peers at school because of their sexual orientation, and more
20 than 60% were verbally harassed because of their gender
21 expression; and

1 WHEREAS, More than 38% of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and
2 transgender students reported being physically harassed by
3 their peers at school because of their sexual orientation, and
4 over 27% were physically harassed because of their gender
5 expression; and

6 WHEREAS, Over 18% of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and
7 transgender students reported being physically assaulted by
8 their peers at school because of their sexual orientation, and
9 more than 12% were physically assaulted because of their gender
10 expression; and

11 WHEREAS, More than 60% of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and
12 transgender students reported that they felt unsafe in school,
13 and nearly 30% reported missing at least one entire school day
14 in the preceding month because of safety concerns; and

15 WHEREAS, Transgender students were more likely than all
16 other students to report feeling unsafe at school because of
17 their gender expression; and

18 WHEREAS, According to the National Transgender
19 Discrimination Survey, those who expressed a transgender
20 identity or gender nonconformity while in grades K through 12
21 reported alarming rates of harassment, physical assault, and

1 sexual violence so severe that almost 15% of those surveyed had
2 to leave school; and

3 WHEREAS, Student academic performance is affected such
4 that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students who
5 experienced high levels of verbal harassment because of their
6 sexual orientation or gender expression report a grade point
7 average nearly a half grade lower than those of lesbian, gay,
8 bisexual, and transgender students who experienced low levels
9 of such harassment; and

10 WHEREAS, The presence of supportive staff contributed to a
11 range of positive indicators, including fewer reports of
12 missing school, fewer reports of feeling unsafe, greater
13 academic achievement, higher educational aspirations, and a
14 greater sense of school belonging; and

15 WHEREAS, A growing number of cities and local education
16 authorities in the State of Illinois are adopting laws and
17 policies to prohibit name-calling, bullying, harassment, and
18 discrimination against students on the basis of their sexual
19 orientation and gender identity or expression; and

20 WHEREAS, Every child should be guaranteed an education free
21 from name-calling, bullying, harassment, and discrimination
22 regardless of his or her sexual orientation and gender identity

1 or expression; therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
3 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
4 we show our support for the goals and ideals of the National
5 Day of Silence; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That we urge the Governor to issue a proclamation
7 calling on the people of the United States to observe the
8 National Day of Silence with appropriate ceremonies, programs,
9 and activities; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That we encourage cities and local education
11 authorities in the State of Illinois to adopt laws and policies
12 to prohibit name-calling, bullying, harassment, and
13 discrimination against students, teachers, and other school
14 staff, regardless of their sexual orientation and gender
15 identity or expression, so that our nation's schools are
16 institutions where all individuals are able to focus on
17 learning.