



HR1207

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the
4 Civil Rights Act of 1964; and

5 WHEREAS, The history of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 began
6 with a speech from President John F. Kennedy on June 11, 1963,
7 in which he asked for legislation "giving all Americans the
8 right to be served in facilities which are open to the public -
9 hotels, restaurants, theaters, retail stores, and similar
10 establishments" and "greater protection for the right to vote";
11 on June 19, 1963, the president sent his bill to Congress as it
12 was originally written, saying legislative action was
13 "imperative"; and

14 WHEREAS, Upon the bill's entrance to the United States
15 House of Representatives, it was referred to the Judiciary
16 Committee, where, after a series of hearings on the bill, the
17 committee strengthened the act, adding provisions to ban racial
18 discrimination in employment, providing greater protection to
19 black voters, eliminating segregation in all publicly owned
20 facilities, and strengthening the anti-segregation clauses
21 regarding public facilities such as lunch counters, as well as
22 authorization for the Attorney General to file lawsuits to
23 protect individuals against the deprivation of any rights

1 secured by the Constitution or federal law; and

2 WHEREAS, President Kennedy called the congressional
3 leaders to the White House in late October of 1963 to line up
4 the necessary votes in the House for passage; the bill was
5 reported out of the Judiciary Committee in November of 1963 and
6 referred to the Rules Committee, where it was feared that the
7 bill would stall; however, following the assassination of
8 President Kennedy on November 22, 1963, the political situation
9 changed and new President Lyndon Johnson came out in support of
10 the bill; due to the diligent efforts of President Johnson and
11 many others, the bill was allowed to pass through the Rules
12 Committee and head toward the Senate; and

13 WHEREAS, Once the bill made it to the Senate, it faced
14 great opposition by a group of Senators known as the "Southern
15 Bloc"; 18 southern Democratic Senators and one Republican
16 Senator led by Richard Russell (D-GA) launched a filibuster to
17 prevent the passage of the bill; after 54 days of filibuster, a
18 substitute bill was introduced the was able to attract enough
19 Republican swing votes to end the filibuster; and

20 WHEREAS, On June 19, 1964, the substitute bill passed the
21 Senate by a vote of 73-27 and quickly passed through the
22 House-Senate conference committee, which adopted the Senate
23 version of the bill; following the conference bill's passage by

1 both houses of Congress, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was
2 signed into law by President Johnson on July 2, 1964; and

3 WHEREAS, Today, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 stands as one
4 of the main foundations of the rule of law and the guarantees
5 of freedom and equality as set forth in the United States
6 Constitution; therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
8 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
9 we commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of
10 1964 and urge the citizens of this State to take part in
11 suitable celebrations and events celebrating the anniversary
12 of this important event.