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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The Executive Board of the International Olympic Committee has proposed eliminating the sport of wrestling from the Summer Olympic Games beginning in 2020; and

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WHEREAS, The proposal remains to be approved or disapproved by the full committee at its September 2013 general assembly; and

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WHEREAS, Wrestling was one of the original sports of the ancient Greek Olympic Games in 708 B.C. and of the first modern Olympic Games in 1896; it may be the world's oldest sport; and

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WHEREAS, Wrestling has been a traditional strength of the United States Olympic team, with 124 medals having been awarded to the United States throughout history; and

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WHEREAS, The sport of wrestling builds great strength, not only of body, but also of character, including the virtues of self-confidence, self-discipline, courage, and sportsmanship; and

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WHEREAS, Wrestling has produced many outstanding national leaders, including presidents, United States supreme court justices, members of congress, and business and military

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1 leaders, as well as many outstanding leaders in Illinois; and

2 WHEREAS, Wrestling provides mainstream opportunities to  
3 athletes of all physical builds and body sizes, including the  
4 visually impaired, hearing impaired, and otherwise physically  
5 challenged student athletes who may not otherwise have the  
6 opportunity to participate in athletics; and

7 WHEREAS, Illinois has the second most high school wrestlers  
8 of any state in the nation with 17,112 high school boys and  
9 girls wrestling in the 2011-12 year; the Illinois Kids  
10 Wrestling Federation, USA Wrestling's state association in  
11 Illinois, has the largest membership in the nation within USA  
12 Wrestling, with almost 19,000 members ages 5-14 last year and a  
13 complete program of events and opportunities for wrestlers of  
14 all levels in the State; and

15 WHEREAS, Many of these young Illinoisians dream of  
16 representing the United States on the international stage at  
17 the Olympic Games; Illinois has produced numerous Olympic team  
18 members including Ellis Coleman, T.C. Dantzler, Jim Gruenwald,  
19 Joe Williams, Kevin Bracken, Derrick Waldroup, Michial Foy, Rob  
20 Eiter, Mike Farina, and others plus world medalists and team  
21 members in all 3 styles; and

22 WHEREAS, Illinois is also active in college wrestling, with

1 18 college programs including Division I universities Northern  
2 Illinois, Northwestern, Southern Illinois University at  
3 Edwardsville, and the University of Illinois; Division II  
4 McKendree University; Division III universities Augustana  
5 College, Elmhurst College, Knox College, North Central  
6 College, the University of Chicago, Wheaton College, and junior  
7 college programs Kennedy-King College, Lincoln College, Rend  
8 Lake College, Triton College, Waubonsee CC, Wilbur Wright  
9 College, and William Rainey Harper College; former Speaker of  
10 the House Dennis Hastert of Illinois was a college wrestler at  
11 Wheaton College and successful high school coach before  
12 entering public service; and

13 WHEREAS, Wrestling is so ingrained in the life and history  
14 of the United States and the State of Illinois that even the  
15 16th U.S. president, Abraham Lincoln, was an accomplished  
16 wrestler; his prowess as a grappler earned him enshrinement in  
17 the National Wrestling Hall of Fame and he is noted to have  
18 only one defeat in approximately 300 matches over 12 years;  
19 therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL  
21 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we request that the  
22 International Olympic Committee reinstate wrestling as a core  
23 sport of the Summer Olympic Games and that the United States  
24 Olympic Committee continue to support wrestling and work

1 actively toward the reinstatement of Olympic wrestling; and be  
2 it further

3 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
4 presented to the International Olympic Committee and to the  
5 United States Olympic Committee.