WHEREAS, Dennie Bridges, Illinois Wesleyan University athletic director and coach of the Titans basketball team, has announced his retirement as coach after 36 seasons; and

WHEREAS, Coach Bridges is a native of Anchor, Illinois; as a student at Illinois Wesleyan University he was a four-year lettermen and starter in basketball and baseball and a three-year football lettermen (all-conference quarterback); he was a two-year captain, most valuable player, and all-conference player while playing basketball; he is currently 40th in school scoring history with 926 career points; and

WHEREAS, After graduation in 1961, Dennie Bridges coached at Plainfield High School for three years; he returned to Illinois Wesleyan University in 1964 as assistant basketball and head tennis coach; in the 1965-1966 season he became head basketball coach, leading the Titans to a sixth College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin (CCIW) championship in seven years; in 1981 he became the athletic director at Illinois Wesleyan University; and

WHEREAS, As athletic director, Coach Bridges has added women's varsity swimming, women's soccer, women's cross country, and women's golf; he has seen the return of men's varsity swimming, and added men's soccer as a varsity sport; the construction of the Shirk Center and Fort Natatorium was completed during his time as athletic director; he was active in fundraising for the Jack Horenberger Baseball Field, which opened in April of 1999 and yielded new facilities in softball, the Neis Soccer Field, and renovations of the football field and outdoor track; Coach Bridges will continue his responsibilities as athletic director after his retirement from coaching, and the staff and students at
Illinois Wesleyan University can look forward to the continued success of this position; and

WHEREAS, Coach Bridges has a career coaching record of 667-319; this season the team finished 24-7 and placed third in the national Division III tournament; the 1997 team won the Division III title, earning him Division III "Coach of the Year" honors; and his 1996 team also won a third place national finish; and

WHEREAS, Coach Bridges is one of only 22 college coaches with more than 650 victories and retires as the winningest active coach in NCAA Division III men's basketball and he is second in Division III history; Coach Bridges has coached in the CCIW longer and won more league championships than any other coach in CCIW history; he has a league record of 421-129 with 17 titles; and

WHEREAS, Coach Bridges has coached teams into the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics national tournament seven times and compiled a record of 23-11 in NAIA postseason play, with two of his teams reaching the quarterfinals; Coach Bridges has conducted basketball clinics in Brazil, New Zealand, and Australia; he is a member of the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame; he received the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association Buzzy O'Connor award for meritorious service; and he has been the State's Division III Coach of the Year many times; and

WHEREAS, Coach Bridges has been an excellent role model for the young men he has worked with at Illinois Wesleyan University; he has had a positive effect in the shaping of their futures; and he has been a great sportsman; and

WHEREAS, Coach Dennie Bridges and his wife, Rita have three children, Angie, Steve, and Eric; they are the proud grandparents of Alyssa, Carly, Keegan, and Summer; therefore,
be it

RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
NINETY-SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
we congratulate Coach Dennie Bridges on his successful
coaching career at Illinois Wesleyan University and wish him
nothing but the best in his future endeavors; and be it
further

RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
presented to Coach Dennie Bridges.