



HR0556

LRB103 35140 LAW 65104 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to recognize and celebrate the birthdate
4 of the late Gene "Coach Ping" Pingatore on October 25, 2023;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, Gene Pingatore was born on October 25, 1936 and
7 passed away on June 26, 2019; he was raised in Cicero; he
8 graduated from St. Mel's High School in 1954; he earned his
9 Bachelor of Arts in History from Loyola University of Los
10 Angeles, known today as Loyola Marymount University, in 1958;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, Following his college graduation, Gene Pingatore
13 returned home and began working as a freshman boys basketball
14 coach at St. Joseph High School in Westchester in 1960, the
15 school's first academic year; he became the head varsity coach
16 of the St. Joseph High School boys basketball team, the
17 Chargers, in 1969; he served as head coach for 51 years and was
18 the most successful basketball coach in Illinois High School
19 Association (IHSA) history; he further served the school in a
20 number of roles, including as a social studies teacher, the
21 director of recruitment, the assistant principal, the dean of
22 students, the director of development, the acting principal,
23 the director of building and grounds, the special events

1 coordinator, and the alumni director; and

2 WHEREAS, Under Gene Pingatore's guidance, the St. Joseph
3 High School boys basketball team was one of the best in the
4 State, winning 34 regional championships and 13 sectionals,
5 advancing to the state finals six times, and winning two state
6 championships, Class 2A in 1999 and Class 3A in 2015; he
7 possessed a record of 1,035-383, becoming the only coach in
8 Illinois to accomplish 1,000 wins, making him one of only 15
9 coaches in the nation; and

10 WHEREAS, Gene Pingatore received many accolades for his
11 work, including being named Educator of the Year by the
12 Illinois State Crime Commission/Police Athletic League of
13 Illinois in 2008, Coach of the West for the McDonald
14 All-American Game in Chicago in 2011, Coach of the Year by the
15 Central Officials Association in 2016, and Coach of the Year
16 by Pioneer Press and Suburban Life in 1978, 1979, and 1999, and
17 again by Suburban Life in 1981, 1987, 1988, 1992, 1995, 1999,
18 and 2004; he also received the Ellie Hasan Award from the
19 Central Officials Association in 2005, the De La Salle Award
20 for Service and Leadership in the Community from Lewis
21 University in 2010, and the 2018 Morgan Wootten Award for
22 Lifetime Achievement in Coaching High School Basketball from
23 the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame; and

1 WHEREAS, Gene Pingatore was affectionately known as "Coach
2 Ping", and he became nationally known for his starring role in
3 the critically acclaimed 1994 documentary Hoop Dreams; his
4 leadership and guidance positively impacted an immeasurable
5 number of students; and

6 WHEREAS, Gene Pingatore coached many talented student
7 athletes who played professionally in the U.S. and abroad,
8 including Indiana All-American and NBA's Isiah Thomas, Indiana
9 All-American Daryl Thomas who played in Europe, Kansas State
10 All-American and CBA's Deryl Cunningham who played in Europe,
11 Clifford Scales who played in Finland, Carl Hayes who played
12 in Europe, Marty Clark who played in South America, NBA's Amal
13 McCaskill, Gerald Eaker who played in Europe and Mexico,
14 Marlon London who played in Europe and Latin America, Brandon
15 Watkins who played in Europe, and 2010 College Player of the
16 Year and NBA's Evan Turner, as well as Dallas Cowboys and
17 Chicago Bears offensive lineman Andy Fredrick and Chicago
18 Bears wide receiver Cameron Meredith; and

19 WHEREAS, Gene Pingatore also coached several players who
20 led rich collegiate careers, including Robert Morris' Kenny
21 Williams, Marquette's Tony Reeder, University of Illinois at
22 Chicago's Tony Freeman, Northern Illinois' Brian Molis,
23 Marquette's William Gates, Dayton's Rodney Horton, Bowling
24 Green's Jabari Mattox, Iowa and Southern Illinois' Tony

1 Freeman Jr., Notre Dame's Jonathan Peoples, Illinois' Demetri
2 McCamey, Nebraska's Glynn Watson, Northwestern's Jordan Ash,
3 and University of Southern California's Nick Rakocevic; and

4 WHEREAS, Gene Pingatore was the son of the late Frank and
5 Annette Pingatore; the brother of the late Sandra Pingatore;
6 the father of Lisa; the grandfather of Erin, Kelli, and Jack;
7 the fiance of Jill Oakley; the uncle of Frank, Nick, and the
8 late Robert; and the great-uncle, godfather, cousin, and
9 friend of many; therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
11 HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
12 we declare October 25, 2023 as Gene "Coach Ping" Pingatore Day
13 in the State of Illinois; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That we remember the legacy Gene Pingatore
15 created and the many lives he touched during his lifetime; and
16 be it further

17 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
18 presented to the family of Gene Pingatore as an expression of
19 our esteem and respect.