

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are pleased to recognize milestone events in
4 the lives of the citizens of the State of Illinois; and

5 WHEREAS, It has come to our attention that Silas Purnell
6 is retiring from the position of director of the Educational
7 Services Division at Ada S. McKinley community Services,
8 Inc., after 34 years of service; and

9 WHEREAS, Silas Purnell was born on March 10, 1923 in
10 Chicago; he is a graduate of the Chicago Public School System
11 and received his bachelor's degree in business administration
12 from the Tuskegee Institute; in addition, he served in the
13 United States Air Force for 3 and one-half years; and

14 WHEREAS, Mr. Purnell was employed for 12 years with Coca
15 Cola Bottling Company, where he served 10 of those years as
16 Marketing Manager; and

17 WHEREAS, In 1967, Mr. Purnell began his career at Ada S.
18 McKinley after spending a year as a volunteer; his base of
19 operations for the past 34 years was a basement level unit in
20 the Dearborn Homes public housing development at 2961 South
21 Dearborn Street on Chicago's South Side; and

22 WHEREAS, During his tenure at Ada S. McKinley Community
23 Services, Inc., Mr. Purnell instituted programs to get
24 minority youth off the streets, encourage them to finish high
25 school, and counsel and support their efforts to enroll in
26 college; to date, he has helped over 50,000 young
27 African-American men and women enroll in over 200 colleges
28 and universities throughout the country and increased the
29 retention rate of the students he has assisted to well over
30 50 percent with many continuing on to graduate and
31 professional schools; and

1 WHEREAS, Mr. Purnell uses a "no nonsense" approach to
2 education; he counsels each student based on their academic
3 and professional ambitions and gives them the encouragement,
4 wisdom, and vision to accomplish their goals; and

5 WHEREAS, In addition to his duties, Mr. Purnell has gone
6 beyond the call of duty by helping less advantaged students
7 with anything from busfare to eyeglasses and has been
8 available to counsel on issues far beyond the classroom; and

9 WHEREAS, Silas Purnell has served as a member of numerous
10 organizations and volunteer services, including the National
11 Association of College Admission Counselors, past chairman of
12 the Human Relations Committee, member of the Veterans
13 Committee, the Illinois Association of College Admissions
14 Counselors, the National Scholarship and Service Fund for
15 Negro Students, member of the Council for College Attendance,
16 the Pullman Foundation, the Office of the Superintendent of
17 Public Instruction, board member for the Illinois Council for
18 Educational Services, chairman for the National Coordinating
19 Committee for Educational Services, the Illinois State
20 Scholarship Commission, the Midwest Community Council, the
21 National Association for Financial Aid to Minority Students,
22 the Research Triangle Institute, member of the American
23 Personnel and Guidance Association Non-White Concerns
24 Division, the College Entrance Examination Board, member of
25 Midwest Association of Student Financial Aid Opportunity
26 Program Personnel, founder of Principal Scholars Program,
27 Olive Harvey Community College, the Chicago City Colleges
28 Career Center, chairman of the nominating committee for the
29 Chicago City College Board of Trustees, member of the Chicago
30 Urban League, member of the Council of College Attendance,
31 board member of the Boys and Girls Club of Chicago, member of
32 the Illinois Concerned Blacks in Higher Education, member of
33 the Wendell Phillips High School Hall of Fame and Alumni, and

1 member of Mid America Association of Educational Opportunity
2 Program Personnel; and

3 WHEREAS, In addition, Mr. Purnell has provided his time
4 and service to the Illinois Department of Public Aid, the
5 Illinois Board of Higher Education, Operation P.U.S.H. and
6 the N.A.A.C.P; and

7 WHEREAS, Silas Purnell will be remembered as a mentor,
8 role model, and dedicated leader in the community whose
9 determination helped and encouraged thousands of
10 African-American youth to pursue their dreams and ambitions;
11 therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
13 NINETY-SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
14 we congratulate Silas Purnell on his retirement after 34
15 years of service as director of the Educational Services
16 Division at Ada S. McKinley Community Services, Inc. and we
17 wish him well in all of his future endeavors; and be it
18 further

19 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
20 presented to Silas Purnell as an expression of our esteem.