

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are honored to recognize February as Black
4 History Month and the institutions that have provided the
5 African-American community with many years of constructive
6 influence; and

7 WHEREAS, Shiloh Baptist Church in Englewood has exerted a
8 profound influence on its community by providing over a
9 century of service and worship; and

10 WHEREAS, In 1889, Mr. and Mrs. Thorton Jones held a
11 prayer meeting in their home that evolved into the Shiloh
12 Baptist Church; the beginning of a church home for Shiloh was
13 in a storefront on 63rd and Halsted where the Holland Jewelry
14 Store is now located; and

15 WHEREAS, The first pastor of the Shiloh Baptist Church
16 was Reverend Richard DeBaptiste, an outstanding leader who
17 helped organize the National Baptist Convention and served as
18 its Historian; he also served as pastor of Olivet Baptist
19 Church; and

20 WHEREAS, Reverend Dr. David H. Harris came to Shiloh in
21 1899 and became the guide for the spiritual destiny of the
22 church for more than thirty years; it became apparent to Dr.
23 Harris that Shiloh was an essential and growing part of the
24 religious life in the community, and a new brick structure
25 was built and dedicated to meet their needs; and

26 WHEREAS, The Reverend Thomas B. Chapman was called to
27 Shiloh on January 1, 1942; his wisdom and method of financing
28 gained him the reputation of a great church financier; under
29 Rev. Chapman's guidance, the church mortgage was paid and
30 ceremonially burned on Sunday, February 13, 1944; and

31 WHEREAS, Following Pastor Thomas Chapman, Reverend James

1 R. C. Penn, the first black park district policeman, was
2 called to be pastor of the Shiloh Baptist Church from 1947 to
3 the spring of 1949; and

4 WHEREAS, In the fall of 1949, Reverend Owen D. Pelt came
5 to Shiloh and brought with him a rich spiritual life, wise
6 administration, endearing fellowship, active but humble
7 service, and inspiring leadership; and

8 WHEREAS, Under Rev. Pelt's leadership, Shiloh's first
9 parsonage was purchased in 1951 at 5948 South Throop Street
10 and the mortgage was paid nineteen years ahead of schedule;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, Rev. Pelt organized the 12 month clubs, the
13 men's club, and the Federal Credit Union; and

14 WHEREAS, In November 1965, construction was started at
15 7058 South Racine Avenue to build the dream of Rev. Pelts, a
16 building that could supply the physical and spiritual needs
17 of the church membership and community; sadly, Rev. Pelt
18 passed away before its completion; and

19 WHEREAS, In addition to his service and dedication with
20 his church, Reverend Owen Pelt was active in the civil rights
21 movement; on February 13, 1956, Rev. Pelt, with Martin Luther
22 King, Jr., met with the United Packinghouse Workers Union to
23 discuss lobbying the Chicago-based parent company of the
24 Montgomery City Lines, the National Lines, in response to the
25 arrest of Rosa Parks; and

26 WHEREAS, The Honorable Rev. Owen Pelt served his state as
27 a member of the Illinois House of Representatives from
28 1967-1968; and

29 WHEREAS, Reverend Cleodus Jemison Brooks was called to
30 Shiloh on March 17, 1969, and served as the longest tenured
31 pastor in the history of the church; and

1 WHEREAS, Under Rev. Jemison Brooks, Shiloh reached its
2 pinnacle of financial stability; Rev. Brooks organized a
3 gospel chorus and the Mother's Board; he built and furnished
4 a church in Lasoto, South Africa, which is named for Shiloh;
5 Reverend Jemison Brooks passed away October 23, 1999; and

6 WHEREAS, Reverend Ervin R. Millsaps was elected as Pastor
7 and assumed the pulpit on Sunday, October 28, 2001; Rev.
8 Millsaps received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Shaw
9 University in Religion and Philosophy in 1992; in 1995, he
10 received a Masters of Divinity with Christian Education from
11 the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest,
12 North Carolina; later, in 1998, he received a Doctor of
13 Ministry Degree from United Theological Seminary in Dayton,
14 Ohio; and

15 WHEREAS, Dr. Millsaps and his wife, Lizzie, have a
16 daughter, Octavia Ruth; Dr. Millsaps brings with him to
17 Shiloh experience as a mature teacher and pastor; he comes to
18 break down some of the old staid traditions and to build new
19 traditions based on the Gospel; therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
21 NINETY-SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
22 we congratulate the members of the Shiloh Baptist Church for
23 their loving and guiding influence and contributions to their
24 community in the more than 112 years of the Church's
25 existence; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be sent
27 to Reverend Ervin R. Millsaps, so that he may present it to
28 his congregation as an expression of our profound respect.