

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are proud 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 Sargeant
6 Cleveland "Pop" Thomas of Kankakee recently retired after 30
7 years of service with the Kankakee Police Department; and

8 WHEREAS, Mr. Thomas was the fourth child born into a
9 family of ten, and was raised by his grandparents; they
10 taught him the importance of respect and discipline; and

11 WHEREAS, Mr. Thomas learned many positive lessons by
12 playing basketball; he learned to work hard, play fair, and
13 be a team player; though it was rare for African-Americans to
14 play at Kankakee High School then, Mr. Thomas did play and
15 helped his team win three tournaments in one season;

16 WHEREAS, Due to the Draft in 1965, Mr. Thomas had to
17 forgo a basketball scholarship to Colorado State University;
18 he chose to join the Air Force and became a "Fly Boy"; it was
19 during his time with the Air Force that his police career got
20 started; while serving as a military police officer, Mr.
21 Thomas provided security for the Joint Chiefs of Staff and at
22 President Nixon's inauguration, he stood next to Lyndon
23 Johnson; and

24 WHEREAS, After considering many law enforcement job
25 opportunities following his Air Force career, Mr. Thomas
26 joined the Kankakee Police Department in 1971; in 1974, he
27 made history by becoming the first African-American detective
28 in Kankakee County; and

29 WHEREAS, Mr. Thomas was instrumental in forming Community
30 Oriented Policing in the city of Kankakee in 1991; he and six
31 other officers were the first proactive policing unit in the

1 State of Illinois; it was in 1993 when Mr. Thomas and the
2 First Ward Police Walking Patrol hit the streets to keep the
3 citizens safe; and

4 WHEREAS, Mr. Thomas was promoted to Sargeant in 1994, and
5 by 1995, he had advanced to an administrative position,
6 Sargeant of Internal Affairs; and

7 WHEREAS, In his thirty years with the Kankakee Police
8 Department, Cleveland "Pop" Thomas is most proud that he
9 "made a difference in peoples lives"; therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
11 NINETY-SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
12 we congratulate Cleveland "Pop" Thomas for his thirty years
13 of service with the Kankakee Police Department and wish him
14 a happy retirement and all the best in his future endeavors;
15 and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
17 presented to Cleveland "Pop" Thomas as an expression of our
18 esteem.