

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 11

1. WHEREAS, more than two centuries ago, our founders envisioned a new nation, a land free from tyranny and filled with opportunity, prosperity, and liberty for all. Many Irish people, faced with severe hardship in their homeland, embraced the dream of a more promising future and left behind Ireland's shores, their families, and their friends for a new beginning in America. Each year during the month of March, we celebrate these courageous men and women of Ireland and remember with pride their many contributions to our nation; and

WHEREAS, with strength, courage, wit, and creativity, Irish Americans have flourished in our diverse nation of immigrants. Writers such as Flannery O'Connor and Eugene O'Neill have transformed our literature; entrepreneurs like Henry Ford helped revolutionize American industry; performers such as Gregory Peck and Helen Hayes have enriched the arts; patriots such as Audie Murphy, our most decorated soldier of World War II, redefined the meaning of courage; and social reformers such as suffragist Leonora Barry and labor organizer Mary Kenney O'Sullivan fought for the rights of others. Generations of Irish Americans have worked alongside their fellow Americans to build a more perfect union, and America is a stronger nation because of them; and

WHEREAS, during his visit to Ireland in 1963, President Kennedy reminded us that "our two nations, divided by distance, have been united by history". Today, people on both sides of the Atlantic are united not only by history, but also once again by a dream of a better way of life. This month, as we celebrate Saint Patrick's Day and our shared heritage with Ireland, we remember as well our common love of liberty, commitment to progress, and quest for lasting peace, and we look toward a future as proud as our past; and

WHEREAS, 150 years ago, the blight that struck Ireland's potato crop ("the single root that changed the history of the world"), known as the Great Famine, caused 2,000,000 of Ireland's population to emigrate, mostly to America's shores, and in 1847 alone, 25,000 Irish immigrants arrived in Boston; by 1851, the end of the famine exodus, 1,712 emigrant ships had sailed up the Narrows into New York harbor, and during the "Great Hunger" (1845-1851) more people left Ireland than had emigrated in the previous 250 years; and

WHEREAS, within a few years of their arrival in the United States, these Irish immigrants took jobs as laborers, built railroads, canals, and schools, dedicated themselves to help build this nation, and this same legacy remains a part of today's American mainstream; and

WHEREAS, James Smith, George Taylor, Matthew Thornton, and Charles Thomson, four of the individuals who signed the Declaration of Independence, were Irish born and nine other signers were of Irish ancestry; more than 200 Irish-Americans have been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor and 19 Presidents of the United States proudly claim Irish heritage, included among them, the first president, George Washington;

WHEREAS, the 44,000,000 Americans of Irish ancestry, like their forebearers, continue to enrich all aspects of life in the United States, in science, education, art, agriculture, business, industry, literature, music, athletics, military and governmental service.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Missouri Senate, Ninety-Third General Assembly, First Regular Session, the House of Representatives concurring therein, do hereby designate the month of March 2005 as Irish-American Heritage Month. The Governor is requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the state of Missouri to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Missouri Senate be instructed to prepare properly inscribed a copy of this resolution for the Governor of the state of Missouri.

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Resolution
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