

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 14

Whereas, a century ago, in October 1924, Ireland formally opened diplomatic relations with the United States of America when Timothy Smiddy presented his credentials to President Calvin Coolidge. Following the Irish people's long and painful struggle for independence, the U.S. was one of the first nations to recognize the fledgling Irish state earlier that year, and when Smiddy emerged from the White House, he had become Ireland's first Ambassador to any country in the world. It was very appropriate that Ireland's first representative overseas should be dispatched to Washington, D.C. for, while 1924 marked the beginning of formal diplomatic relations, the deep Irish-American connection dated back centuries; and

Whereas, today, nearly one-tenth of Americans identify as being of Irish ancestry. Irish immigrants helped build the America we know today, not only the physical infrastructure from the skyscrapers of Manhattan to the transcontinental railroad, but also the political construct that is America; and

Whereas, Irish people have made an enormous contribution to public debate and politics in America, from their local communities right up to the White House. More than twenty American Presidents claimed some Irish ancestry. But the influence of Irish America extends well beyond the Oval Office and the Capitol building, to every state within the Union, most evident in the significant number of state legislators within the American Irish State Legislators Caucus; and

Whereas, since Timothy Smiddy's momentous audience in the Oval Office 100 years ago, a further eighteen Irish

Ambassadors have presented credentials to U.S. Presidents. Over this time, Ireland's relations with the United States have evolved significantly. From an impoverished and internationally isolated state, scarred by years of conflict, Ireland has transformed over the past century. Ireland today is at peace, economically prosperous, and culturally vibrant; and

Whereas, this transformation is due to the support of friends in the United States, from the crucial role America played in brokering peace in Northern Ireland, culminating with the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, to the huge American economic investment in Ireland. There are almost one thousand U.S. companies in Ireland, employing over two hundred thousand people directly. Our economic relationship is truly two-way; some one hundred thousand people are employed in the U.S. by over 650 Irish-owned companies, across all fifty states. Indeed, Ireland is now the ninth largest source of foreign direct investment in the U.S.; and

Whereas, the U.S.-Irish relationship is a shining example of how ancestral ties, historical connections, cultural affinities, and shared values can create a foundation for enduring partnership and mutual prosperity. Irish American state legislators across the United States are playing a vitally important role in fostering this partnership and ensuring that it continues and flourishes for another century to come:

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the members of the Missouri Senate, One Hundred and Third General Assembly, Second Regular Session, the House of Representatives concurring therein, hereby recognize and celebrate the special relationship between the United States and Ireland; and

Be It Further Resolved that the Secretary of the Senate be instructed to prepare a properly inscribed copy of this resolution for the American Irish State Legislators Caucus.