WHEREAS, Heroin is an illegal and highly addictive drug that is both the most abused and the most rapidly acting of the opiates; and

WHEREAS, Heroin was first synthesized in 1874 from morphine, a naturally occurring substance extracted from the seed pods of certain varieties of poppy plants; and

WHEREAS, Heroin is typically sold as a white or brownish powder or as the black sticky substance known as "black tar heroin"; and

WHEREAS, Although purer heroin is becoming more common, most heroin is "cut" with other drugs or with substances such as sugar, starch, and powdered milk, as well as strychnine or other poisons; and

WHEREAS, Because heroin abusers do not know the actual strength of the drug or its true contents, they are at risk of overdose and death; and

WHEREAS, Heroin also poses special problems because of transmission of HIV and other diseases that can occur from sharing needles or other injection equipment, and because of
the medical and social consequences of abuse, including fetal effects, crime, violence, and disruptions to the family, workplace, and educational environments; and

WHEREAS, According to "Heroin Use in Illinois: A Ten-Year Multiple Indicator Analysis, 1998 to 2008", the Chicago metropolitan area ranked among the worst nationally for heroin-related problems, including ranking first in the number of individuals admitted to the emergency room for heroin abuse and first in the percentage of arrestees testing positive for heroin; and

WHEREAS, The study also found a large increase in deaths from heroin overdoses in the collar counties, including a 130% increase in Lake County from 2000 to 2009, a 150% increase in McHenry County in just a three-year period, a doubling of heroin-related deaths in Will County in a period of just two years, and a total of 78 heroin-related deaths in DuPage County over a three-year period, indicating that heroin remains a continuing problem in DuPage County; and

WHEREAS, The study also found the increase in suburban heroin abuse has resulted from increased heroin use among teens, including a 27% increase in suburban Cook County and a 46% increase in the collar counties; in 2008, over 100 individuals in the Chicago Metropolitan Area under the age of
35 died from heroin overdose; and

WHEREAS, Heroin has become the second most common drug after alcohol and the most common illegal substance for which individuals enter treatment in Illinois, compared to the fourth most common reason Illinoisans entered publicly-funded treatment in 1998; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we urge the citizens of the State of Illinois, especially the parents of Illinois youth, to become aware of the dangers associated with the use of heroin and the escalating number of accidental deaths due to heroin overdoses; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we find that comprehensive drug education programs, including the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program, serve as valuable tools in presenting the facts and dangers related to heroin use to Illinois youth; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we designate the date of November 4, 2013 as Heroin Abuse Awareness Day in the State of Illinois in conjunction with National Drug Facts Week from January 27 - February 2, 2014.