

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 98-4698, by Representatives Backlund, McDonald and L. Thomas

WHEREAS, It is the policy of the Washington State Legislature to recognize excellence in all fields of endeavor; and

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth President of the United States of America, demonstrated the highest level of excellence and sacrifice in service to this nation; and

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln was born into poverty as the son of a Kentucky frontiersman, was raised in a log cabin, cleared land and split rails to earn a living as a young man, and although he eventually attained great stature in public life, he never forgot the values he shared with the common people; and

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln, in his efforts to obtain an education, often studied by candlelight late into the night, exemplifying perseverance and acumen in scholastic and professional endeavors, illustrated by the fact that he educated himself in the profession of law, and, following an apprenticeship, earned a well-deserved reputation as a skilled, talented, and respected member of the bar, and became the only United States President to hold a patent; and

WHEREAS, As Judge David Davis, a life-long family friend of President Lincoln, commenting on Abraham Lincoln's perseverance and professional endeavors, stated, "From the humblest poverty, without education, or the means of attaining it, unaided by wealth or influential family connections, he rose, solely, by the strength of his intellect and the force of his character, to the highest position in the world"; and

WHEREAS, Only one week after Abraham Lincoln's presidential inauguration, the southern states formed the Confederacy and within a month the Civil War began, tearing the fabric of the Union and pitting brother against brother and family against family; and

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln thus faced a task greater than any that had ever rested upon the nation; and

WHEREAS, President Lincoln stated, "Without the assistance of that Divine Being, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well"; and

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln continued, throughout the conflict, to hold fast to the principles which he articulated in his second inaugural address, "With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right," and, through adherence to these principles, helped bind the nation together and heal its wounds; and

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln continues to be known and admired for his eloquent and accomplished oratory, and for his ability to articulate the foundational principles of liberty and justice, as exemplified in his debate with Stephen A. Douglas, in which Lincoln voiced opposition to slavery, as he did in the Gettysburg Address; and

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln believed the republican form of government established by the founding fathers to be the best means of ensuring freedom, and became the father of the Republican Party, dedicated to maintaining the principles of constitutional representation under the rule of law; and

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln unselfishly gave of himself throughout his long and distinguished career of public service, which included judicial service in the eighth circuit, service in the Illinois State Legislature, service in the United States Congress, and service as President of the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln courageously issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, which declared "all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, henceforward, shall be forever free"; and

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln, while President of the United States, issued a proclamation declaring a national day of prayer, recognizing, "It is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, and to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon, and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in Holy Scripture, and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord"; and

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln suffered an untimely death at the hands of an assassin, just five days after bringing the Civil War to an end in April 1865; and

WHEREAS, The American people continue to be instilled with hope that the difficulties faced by our nation can be overcome, as we remember the words of Abraham Lincoln, "That this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth";

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives honor the sixteenth President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln.

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Timothy A. Martin, Chief Clerk