

Rep. Lyons offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 393.

A resolution to commemorate President Gerald R. Ford and the invaluable impact of his service to the United States of America in honor of the 40th anniversary of his presidency.

Whereas, After the “long, national nightmare” of the Watergate scandal and President Nixon’s impeachment, Vice President Gerald R. Ford was sworn in as the 38th President of the United States on August 9, 1974; and

Whereas, His ascension to the presidency was the culmination of a career spent in service to the people of the state of Michigan and of the United States, including nearly 25 years as the U.S. Representative from Michigan’s 5th congressional district and eight years as the Republican Minority Leader, where colleagues on both sides of the aisle praised his kindness and knowledge; and

Whereas, With his Midwestern values, inimitable work ethic, and offensive lineman’s ethos, it is indisputable that President Ford was, as former Speaker of the House Tip O’Neill noted, “the right man at the right time who was able to put our nation back together again,”; and

Whereas, With a combination of unwavering optimism, steadfast character, and candid leadership, President Ford immediately set about healing the nation during one of the darkest hours in its history, helping to restore integrity to the nation’s highest office and the “golden rule to our political process”; and

Whereas, President Ford’s tenure in office was marked by a number of noteworthy and memorable domestic achievements, including passage of the Employment Retirement Income Security Act, the Privacy Act of 1974, the Energy Policy Conservation Act, and the Government in Sunshine Act, as well as an extension of the Voting Rights Act, amendments to the Federal Election Campaign Act, and the creation of the Economic Policy Board and the Consumer Products Safety Commission; and

Whereas, President Ford also took office during the height of the Cold War and amidst the ongoing conflict in Vietnam. During his time in office, America would pave the way for the Salt II Accord, evacuate more than 3,000 South Vietnamese children in Operation Babylift, end American involvement in Vietnam, sign the Helsinki Agreement, and help broker the Sinai Interim Agreement to end the Yom Kippur War; and

Whereas, While his term included a number of significant accomplishments in the realms of domestic and foreign policy, no act or undertaking has more defined his presidential tenure than the “full, free and absolute pardon” given to Richard Nixon on September 8, 1974. While politically unpopular and widely panned by critics and commentators, President Ford, a profoundly good and decent man, declared that he could not “rely upon public opinion polls to tell me what is right” and that his “conscience tells me clearly and certainly that I cannot prolong the bad dreams that continue to reopen a chapter that is closed”; and

Whereas, Gerald Ford and his running mate, Senator Robert Dole of Kansas, were defeated by Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter in the 1976 presidential election, bringing his 895-day term as President of the United States to a close on January 20, 1977; and

Whereas, Gerald Ford’s term as president will forever be remembered for exemplifying the integrity, decency, and devotion to duty that President Ford himself embodied and for sacrificing political expediencies for the dictates of conscience and the greater good of the nation; and

Whereas, This nation will forever remember the son of Michigan who took the helm of a ship in crisis, steadying the rudder at a time of national division, distrust and decline, and safely guiding the nation towards a time of peace and prosperity; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body commemorate President Gerald R. Ford and the invaluable impact of his service to the United States of America in honor of the 40th anniversary of his presidency.