

House Resolution 110 - Introduced

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 110

BY MOMMSEN, WOLFE, KURTH, WINCKLER, B. MEYER,
KONFRST, FISHER, KRESSIG, CARLSON, BEST, GERHOLD,
RUNNING-MARQUARDT, HALL, OLDSOON, COHOON,
STECKMAN, M. SMITH, NIELSEN, JACOBY, McCONKEY,
FORBES, BEARINGER, WILBURN, THORUP, ISENHART,
WESSEL-KROESCHELL, OLSON, KAUFMANN, STAED, KURTZ,
SIECK, EHLERT, SHIPLEY, MOHR, and MAXWELL

1 A Resolution recognizing the importance of Minor League
2 Baseball in Iowa and demanding that Major League
3 Baseball abandon its efforts to eliminate Major
4 League Baseball parent-club affiliation with certain
5 franchises located in Iowa.

6 WHEREAS, Iowa has a long and rich connection to
7 baseball, serving as the birthplace of over 200 Major
8 League Baseball players, including Hall of Famer
9 Bob Feller and 2019 World Series Champion Jeremy
10 Hellickson, and providing the setting for one of the
11 most popular baseball films of all time, Field of
12 Dreams, in which a ballpark in rural Iowa is famously
13 confused for heaven; and

14 WHEREAS, Major League Baseball announced that the
15 Field of Dreams property in Dyersville will host a
16 Major League Baseball game featuring the New York
17 Yankees and Chicago White Sox in August of 2020, with
18 Commissioner Rob Manfred recognizing Iowa's unique role
19 in baseball culture and the rustic backdrop that Iowa
20 provides by stating, "We look forward to celebrating
21 the movie's enduring message of how baseball brings
22 people together at this special cornfield in Iowa"; and

1 WHEREAS, the history of professional baseball in
2 Iowa traces back over 100 years to the Keokuk Westerns,
3 who played part of the 1875 season in the National
4 Association, which is considered the first professional
5 baseball league; and

6 WHEREAS, professional baseball first appeared in
7 Davenport and Des Moines in 1879, Burlington in 1889,
8 Cedar Rapids in 1890, and Clinton in 1895, with Des
9 Moines, Burlington, and Cedar Rapids each hosting over
10 100 seasons of professional baseball; and

11 WHEREAS, over 40 million fans bought tickets to
12 Minor League Baseball games in 2019, of which nearly 1
13 million were purchased at Iowa ballparks, meaning that
14 a state that makes up less than 1 percent of the United
15 States population was responsible for over 2 percent
16 of Minor League Baseball ticket sales, demonstrating
17 Iowa's devotion for America's pastime at the Minor
18 League Baseball level; and

19 WHEREAS, the Sports Business Journal recognized
20 the Quad Cities region as the top minor league sports
21 market in the United States in 2015 and named Des
22 Moines as the top minor league sports market in 2017,
23 owing in large part to the entertainment and economic
24 value that Minor League Baseball teams provide in each
25 market; and

26 WHEREAS, the Quad Cities River Bandits spend nearly
27 \$2 million each year on local vendors; additionally,
28 the Quad Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau has
29 stated that more than half of the annual hotel room
30 nights spent in the Quad Cities region are attributable

1 to the River Bandits and other local sporting
2 events; and

3 WHEREAS, the Clinton LumberKings, the only remaining
4 charter club of the Midwest League, create an estimated
5 annual economic impact of \$6.56 million in Clinton
6 County, which contributed to approximately 75 percent
7 of the total tax revenue the county received from
8 domestic tourism in 2018; and

9 WHEREAS, according to the Economic Development
10 Authority, the Burlington Bees have supported, directly
11 and indirectly, \$4.7 million in wages in Des Moines
12 County; and

13 WHEREAS, Major League Baseball wants to eliminate
14 approximately 25 percent of the Minor League Baseball
15 teams in the country, including the Quad City River
16 Bandits, the Clinton LumberKings, and the Burlington
17 Bees; and

18 WHEREAS, many Iowans live at least three hours
19 away from the nearest Major League Baseball team and
20 are "blacked out" from watching six of the closest
21 geographic Major League Baseball teams on no-cost
22 television, making local Minor League Baseball teams
23 the best opportunity for fans to see potential Major
24 League Baseball players; and

25 WHEREAS, each Minor League Baseball team in Iowa has
26 been a temporary home for many Major League Baseball
27 stars; the Iowa Cubs have rostered many heroes from
28 the 2016 Chicago Cubs team that broke a 108-year
29 championship drought by winning the World Series; the
30 Cedar Rapids Kernels featured reigning American League

1 Most Valuable Player Mike Trout; the Burlington Bees
2 featured Mark Buehrle, who would win the 2005 World
3 Series with the Chicago White Sox, and also featured
4 Hall of Famers Paul Molitor, Billy Williams, and 2020
5 inductee Larry Walker; the Clinton LumberKings featured
6 Orel Hershiser, Mike Scioscia, and Dave Stewart, all
7 of whom played in the 1988 World Series and each of
8 whom would win at least one World Series Championship
9 during his respective career; and the Quad Cities River
10 Bandits featured beloved Minnesota Twins catcher Joe
11 Mauer, who won three batting titles during his career,
12 and Joe Maddon, who managed the Chicago Cubs to victory
13 in the 2016 World Series; NOW THEREFORE,

14 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
15 That the House of Representatives stands in support of
16 Iowa's Minor League Baseball teams by demanding that
17 Major League Baseball abandon its efforts to eliminate
18 the Major League Baseball parent-club affiliation of
19 the Quad Cities River Bandits, the Clinton LumberKings,
20 and the Burlington Bees; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the House of
22 Representatives appreciates the economic and cultural
23 benefits that Iowa's Minor League Baseball teams bring
24 to their respective communities and to the entire state
25 of Iowa.