HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Chicago Metro Recycling Education and Outreach (REO) campaign was funded by a $2 million grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and had a formal kick-off on November 13, 2024, in which the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus partnered with the Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County (SWANCC), the Solid Waste Agency of Lake County (SWALCO), and DuPage, Kane, McHenry, and Will counties to increase the collection of recyclable materials and decrease contamination of the recycling stream in the region; and

WHEREAS, REO partners used campaign funds to hire Gud Marketing, Inc. and collaborated to create "Loop", a cartoon-like recycling cart mascot with an appetite for residents' recyclables, to build public confidence in recycling and simplify recycling information; and

WHEREAS, Loop the Cart was introduced when REO partners announced the grant's formal outreach campaign, Feed The Cart, on October 20, 2025, and in the process, became the largest recycling education and improvement campaign in State history; and

WHEREAS, Since his inception, Loop's social media campaign

has engaged Chicagoland residents by promoting the environmental and economic benefits of recycling, amassing 66.5 million impressions and reaching over 1 million people through billboards, social media posts and advertisements, and the FeedTheCart.org website; and

WHEREAS, Loop's life-size likeness has traveled far and wide to spread his message to "feed him" clean, dry, loose recyclables, and he has been spotted at many county and city board meetings, resident events, conferences, and platforms, including Chicago Climate Week; and

WHEREAS, The Feed The Cart campaign has been named the 2026 recipient of the Beth Brown Boettner Award for Outstanding Public Education/Outreach Program by the National Recycling Coalition (NRC), a prestigious honor as the NRC Awards are highly regarded due to the coalition serving as the premier national benchmark for recognizing excellence, scalability, and innovation in sustainable materials management; and

WHEREAS, The REO campaign's grant funding ends November 2027, and since Loop has become beloved by many for his fun and positive approach to recycling education and outreach, the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and its partners are committed to sustaining Loop and the Feed The Cart campaign message beyond

the grant's end; and

WHEREAS, Loop and the Feed The Cart campaign were designed with the intent of replicability, a key criterion for award of the U.S. EPA grant, and expansion beyond the Chicago Metro area; and

WHEREAS, The State of Illinois created the Materials Management Advisory Committee (MMAC) in 2019 through Public Act 101-0074 to evaluate existing materials management in Illinois, identify education needs to increase landfill diversion, and set achievable landfill diversion goals; and

WHEREAS, The MMAC estimated waste reduction at 37% and recommended landfill diversion targets of 40% by 2025, 45% by 2030, and 50% by 2035; and

WHEREAS, The MMAC recommended the development and support of a statewide materials management campaign to distribute simple, consistent, and unified waste reduction messaging, including through use of a slogan, logo, and brand; and

WHEREAS, Illinois enacted the Solid Waste Planning and Recycling Act (P.A. 85-1198), requiring counties to adopt solid waste management plans, finding that waste reduction and recycling are preferable to the disposal of municipal waste,

and stating that solid waste management plans shall include public education and notification programs to foster understanding of and encourage compliance with the recycling program; and

WHEREAS, Loop and the Feed The Cart campaign can help counties fulfill the requirements set forth by P.A. 85-1198; and

WHEREAS, Illinois lawmakers have passed legislation to divert a number of specific materials, including electronics, pharmaceuticals, paint, and batteries, and these programs have been successfully implemented statewide, each of which have a need for continuous education and outreach to engage the public; and

WHEREAS, Through these multiple statewide goals and programs, Loop has great potential to support recycling educators in their efforts; and

WHEREAS, Loop and the Feed The Cart campaign have seen success throughout the Chicago Metro region, and this success could be spread to the entire State of Illinois by giving Loop a permanent residency in Illinois as a mascot for proper recycling practices; and

WHEREAS, It is fitting and proper that the Illinois General Assembly honors Loop the Cart as the state recycling mascot for Illinois, encouraging his travels to counties and municipalities throughout the State to increase the amount of recyclable material diverted from landfills, thereby continuing to improve the quality of materials placed into the recycling stream, resulting in a less contaminated, more marketable stream of recyclables; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we declare Loop the Cart the official recycling mascot for the State of Illinois and commend the great work that has been done by the Chicago Metro Recycling Education and Outreach (REO) collaboration and the reach of the Feed The Cart campaign over the past two years in recognition of Loop's first birthday on October 20, 2026; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we recognize Loop as a unifying and positive ambassador of recycling messaging, affirming and amplifying the State's commitment to achieving its waste diversion goals.