

## 2001 ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION 26

1       **Relating to:** the life and public service of Sister Thomas More Bertels.

2               Whereas, Sister Thomas More Bertels, OSF, Ph.D., was born Louise Noel  
3 Bertels on January 18, 1918, in Ironwood, Michigan; and

4               Whereas, in 1939 she entered Holy Family Convent in Manitowoc, Wisconsin,  
5 and in 1942 professed as a Franciscan Sister of Christian Charity accepting the  
6 religious name of Thomas More; and

7               Whereas, academically Sister earned the degrees of Bachelor of Arts, Masters  
8 of Arts, and Doctor of Philosophy, and after teaching at various high schools in  
9 Wisconsin and Michigan became a respected and renowned professor at Silver Lake  
10 College of Manitowoc, established and operated by her order; and

11              Whereas, Sister's love and concern for the future of agriculture and the role of  
12 farm women in agriculture lead her to be a co-founder of Wisconsin Women for  
13 Agriculture, charter member of American Agri-Women, and founding member of the  
14 International Chamber of Agriculture; and

1           Whereas, Sister Thomas More Bertels championed numerous causes on behalf  
2 of agriculture and the agricultural product producers not only by example, but also  
3 by word as expressed in her essay “A Call To Power”, her book entitled “In Pursuit  
4 of Agri Power: The One Thing North American Farmers and Ranchers Can’t  
5 Produce”, and written features in the books “It Takes A Hero” and “Women of  
6 Northeast Wisconsin Dreamers and Doers”; and

7           Whereas, in her lifetime, Sister received countless awards and recognition of  
8 her achievements academically, and on behalf of agriculture, such as: being named  
9 Outstanding Educator of America; founding member of the Center for International  
10 Security Studies of the American Security Council Education Foundation,  
11 appointment to the Board of Governors of the Wisconsin State Bar; and the  
12 prestigious Outstanding Achievement, Leaven, and Veritas awards of the American  
13 Agri-Women; and

14           Whereas, affectionately, Sister was considered by her dearest friends in life to  
15 be a mentor; a motivator; a “Flying Farmers Nun” because of her many travels  
16 worldwide on behalf of agriculture; one provoking action and setting a standard as  
17 a goal for farm women; God’s voice of reason for American agriculture; a “hell-raising  
18 nun” who stirred people to think about solutions to their problems; one who  
19 possessed a “kick-in-the-pants” approach to farmer’s problems; an Agri-Women  
20 Sister; a dear friend; and “our dear Sister T. More”; now, therefore, be it

21           ***Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That*** the members of the  
22 Wisconsin Legislature express their sorrow at the death of Sister Thomas More  
23 Bertels on July 24, 2000; commend the legacy Sister left on behalf of agriculture and  
24 women in agriculture; and extend their condolences to her family, friends, her

1 religious family of the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity, and her agricultural  
2 family of the Wisconsin Women for Agriculture; and, be it further

3 ***Resolved, That*** the assembly chief clerk shall provide copies of this joint  
4 resolution to the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity of Manitowoc, Wisconsin,  
5 and the Wisconsin Women for Agriculture.

6 (END)