

2001 ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION 26

February 8, 2001 – Introduced by Representatives GRONEMUS, ZIEGELBAUER, OTT, FREESE, LASSA, KESTELL, RYBA, ALBERS, PETROWSKI, BALOW, SYKORA, RHOADES, TURNER, MUSSER, NASS, OWENS, MILLER, TOWNSEND, LIPPERT, OLSEN, KREUSER, HUEBSCH, JESKEWITZ, RILEY, J. LEHMAN, HUNDERTMARK, PLOUFF and WILLIAMS, cosponsored by Senators BAUMGART, SCHULTZ, MOEN, LAZICH, FARROW and A. LASEE. Referred to Committee on Rules.

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)