



2009 ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION 18

1 **Relating to:** the life and public service of Rebecca Young.

2 Whereas, Rebecca Conrad “Becky” Young, who for decades served as a
3 champion of justice and fairness in government policies, passed away after battling
4 cancer for a decade at the age of 74 on Tuesday, November 18, 2008, in Madison,
5 Wisconsin; and

6 Whereas, Becky Young was born in Clairton, Pennsylvania on February 28,
7 1934, earned her bachelor’s degree from the University of Michigan in 1955, her
8 master’s degree in teaching from Harvard University in 1963, and her law degree
9 from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 1983; and

10 Whereas, Becky Young met Crawford Young at the University of Michigan,
11 continued their relationship in Morocco in 1956, married on August 17, 1957,
12 eventually moved to Madison, Wisconsin, and together raised 4 daughters; and

13 Whereas, in 1970, Becky Young was elected to the Dane County Board of
14 Supervisors, the first of 12 races she would enter and win; and

1 Whereas, from 1974 to 1976, Becky Young served on the State Highway
2 Commission, was named Deputy Secretary of Administration in 1976, was a member
3 of the Madison School Board from 1979 to 1985, and won election to the Wisconsin
4 state assembly for 7 terms beginning in 1984; and

5 Whereas, in the legislature, Becky Young was known as a powerful advocate for
6 women, children, families, and those less fortunate, one of the most effective women
7 in the assembly, never ceding her position at the table when decisions were made,
8 intelligent, pragmatic, diligent, someone who worked hard to make government
9 work for everyone, and had a remarkable ability to provide people with the tools they
10 needed to be self-sufficient and successful; and

11 Whereas, Becky Young was passionate about her work in areas such as
12 providing child care for working parents, fighting for women's reproductive health
13 care, transportation planning, strengthening families, promoting the university
14 system, improving services for women and children, prohibiting housing
15 discrimination against families with children and people with disabilities, ensuring
16 gender equity, and reforming the juvenile justice system; and

17 Whereas, Becky Young's legislative accomplishments include enacting
18 Wisconsin's Family and Medical Leave Act several years before action on the federal
19 level, initiating the Healthy Start Program to provide health care for pregnant
20 women, creating an increased standard income tax deduction for single parents,
21 implementing progressive policies to treat juvenile offenders and keep them
22 separate from adult inmates, improving programs for incarcerated women who have
23 children, enacting one of the first refundable Earned Income Tax Credits in the
24 country, providing participants in the W-2 welfare program financial assistance for

1 child care and transportation, and developing cost-effective correctional
2 programming in communities to rein in exorbitant prison spending; and

3 Whereas, among her many awards, Becky Young received the NOW Feminist
4 of the Year Award, the Eunice Zoghlin Edgar Lifetime Achievement Award from the
5 American Civil Liberties Union, the Outstanding Legislator Award from the
6 Wisconsin Counties Association, the Extraordinary Commitment to Justice Award
7 from the Benedict Center, the Lifetime Advocacy Award from Disability Rights
8 Wisconsin, was named the Wisconsin Women's Network Stateswoman of the Year,
9 and was the first recipient of the Marlys Matuszak Statewide Impact Award for
10 positive and lasting impact on the Democratic Party and the state of Wisconsin; now,
11 therefore, be it

12 ***Resolved by the assembly, the senate concurring, That*** the members of the
13 Wisconsin legislature commend Rebecca Young for her decades of tireless and
14 devoted service to the community of Madison, Dane County, and the entire state of
15 Wisconsin, her determined advocacy for the most vulnerable members of society, and
16 her enduring grace and spirit, express their deep sorrow at her death, and extend
17 their sincere condolences to her family and friends; and

18 ***Be it further resolved, That*** that the assembly chief clerk shall provide a copy
19 of this joint resolution to Rebecca Young's husband Crawford Young, professor
20 emeritus of political science and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and her
21 daughters Eva Young of Minneapolis, Louise Young of Madison, Estelle Young of
22 Baltimore, and Emily Young of Imperial Beach, California.

23 (END)