



State of Wisconsin
2017 - 2018 LEGISLATURE

LRB-1687/1
RAC:klm

2017 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 4

February 2, 2017 - Introduced by Senator LEMAHIEU, cosponsored by Representatives VORPAGEL and KATSMA. Referred to Committee on Senate Organization.

1 **Relating to:** designating the state of Wisconsin's aviation heritage center.

2 Whereas, the Aviation Heritage Center of Wisconsin was founded by a
3 dedicated group of volunteers and EAA Chapter 766, who raised \$1.4 million to
4 construct its magnificent facility; and

5 Whereas, since it opened its doors in 2005, the Aviation Heritage Center has
6 hosted thousands of visitors and pilots from across the state, nation, and world; and

7 Whereas, the Aviation Heritage Center of Wisconsin is a nonprofit, 501 (c) (3)
8 organization, which exists due to the generous contributions made by visitors,
9 friends, and Wisconsin companies, and which receives no government support, does
10 not charge admission fees, and does not have a paid membership; and

11 Whereas, the Center houses the Governors Kohler Aviation Conference Room
12 and exhibit, which pay tribute to former Wisconsin Governor Walter J. Kohler Sr.
13 (1929-1931), the first U.S. politician to use a private aircraft to campaign for public
14 office and to carry out the duties of the governorship, and to Governor Walter J.
15 Kohler Jr. (1951-1957), who was a private pilot and WWII U.S. Navy veteran; and

1 Whereas, the Center’s mission is to preserve the aviation history of Wisconsin
2 and the legacy of unique episodes in civil, commercial, and military aviation via
3 archiving and public exhibits; and

4 Whereas, the Center’s mission also includes operating aviation education
5 programs so as to encourage young people to pursue careers in aviation-related
6 fields; and

7 Whereas, situated in the heart of the Sheboygan County Memorial Airport in
8 Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin, the Center’s award-winning building is home to
9 several aviation events that attract thousands of people annually, some of which,
10 such as the Annual Air Clinic in July, attract some of the world’s rarest military
11 aircraft and the world’s finest pilots and formation/acrobatic performers; and

12 Whereas, the Center is one of the three significant aviation museums in the
13 state of Wisconsin, and the only one whose mission focuses primarily on the aviation
14 history of Wisconsin; and

15 Whereas, the Center recently acquired a 1946 Douglas DC-3 and is currently
16 working to complete the nation’s only exhibit honoring North Central Airlines—the
17 major air carrier in the Great Lakes regions for 40 years, founded in Clintonville,
18 Wisconsin—which will feature the 1946 Douglas DC-3, which was actually flown by
19 the airline between 1946 and 1968; and

20 Whereas, the Center, in its mission to help Wisconsin residents understand the
21 origins of the significant Hmong population in Wisconsin, also houses the nation’s
22 only exhibit that honors the Hmong pilots who flew the T-28 attack aircraft in
23 support of U.S. operations in the “Secret War” in Laos during the Vietnam War and
24 which includes, as its centerpiece exhibit, a T-28 aircraft that was actually used in
25 Thailand to train the Hmong pilots to fly; and

1 Whereas, at the Center, the flight of Felix Waitkus, “Wisconsin’s Charles
2 Lindbergh,” is recounted via photos and artifacts from his successful trans-Atlantic
3 crossing. In 1934, Waitkus was only the sixth person in history to successfully fly solo
4 from the United States to Europe. Waitkus lived in Kohler, Wisconsin, and his
5 aircraft was customized for the trip by Anton Brotz, the chief engineer for the Kohler
6 Company; now, therefore, be it

7 ***Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That*** from this day
8 henceforth, the Aviation Heritage Center of Wisconsin shall be known as the “State
9 of Wisconsin’s Aviation Heritage Center,” bestowing honor on all those who have
10 worked to preserve the unique civil, commercial, and military aviation history of
11 Wisconsin.

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(END)