

1 House Resolution

2 A resolution honoring Dr. Inga Olla Helseth.

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4 WHEREAS, Dr. Inga Olla Helseth was born January 16,
5 1888, the eldest child of a pioneer Norwegian family who moved
6 to the Florida wilderness of what is now Indian River County
7 when Inga was only eight years old, and

8 WHEREAS, Dr. Helseth's formal education having ended
9 with the move to Florida, she was tutored by her father on
10 Sundays and began her teaching career in a one-room
11 schoolhouse in Malabar at the age of 16, and

12 WHEREAS, Dr. Helseth attended Florida State College for
13 Women, was made life president of the class of 1914, served as
14 a permanent member of the university board of directors, was
15 awarded many honorary degrees, and at the time of her death on
16 October 7, 1987, was the oldest living alumna of the
17 university, and

18 WHEREAS, in 1915, Dr. Helseth organized the senior high
19 school in St. Lucie County and served as its first principal
20 before returning to Florida State College for Women in 1917 to
21 teach, and

22 WHEREAS, Dr. Helseth earned her doctorate at Columbia
23 University in New York City, where she also taught; served as
24 professor of education at Ball State Teacher's College, in
25 Muncie, Indiana; worked on growth pattern studies at the
26 University of Chicago; and from 1930 to 1950 was dean of women
27 and taught at William and Mary College, in Williamsburg,
28 Virginia, and

29 WHEREAS, when Dr. Helseth returned to her home in
30 Indian River County in 1950 to care for her aging parents, she
31 continued pioneering, this time in the field of mental health,

1 setting about to educate and motivate the community to the
2 needs of people in trouble, and

3 WHEREAS, while continuing her work with disturbed
4 children and children with learning problems, Dr. Helseth
5 taught nurses to recognize mental stress in patients and was
6 instrumental in starting a two-year nursing program at Indian
7 River Junior College and directing a county survey which won
8 federal funds to establish the four-county mental health
9 clinic in Ft. Pierce, and

10 WHEREAS, after being forced into retirement in 1973 by
11 a disabling accident, Dr. Helseth continued to be involved in
12 the life of the community, consulting regularly with
13 professionals in the county educational system, NOW,

14 THEREFORE,

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16 Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of
17 Florida:

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19 That the House of Representatives honor the memory of
20 the remarkable Dr. Inga Olla Helseth, a pioneer, writer,
21 educator, children's counselor, and community leader for
22 better mental health practices in Florida.

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