Florida House of Representatives - 1999 By Representative Feeney

1 House Resolution 2 A resolution in recognition of Ronald McDonald 3 House Charities. 4 5 WHEREAS, Ronald McDonald House is a temporary lodging б facility for the families of seriously ill children being 7 treated at nearby hospitals, and 8 WHEREAS, the first Ronald McDonald House opened in 9 Philadelphia in 1974 as the result of the perseverance and dedication of Fred Hill, then a Philadelphia Eagles football 10 11 player, who, when his 3-year-old daughter Kim was diagnosed with leukemia and underwent treatment at the local children's 12 13 hospital, camped out with his wife on hospital chairs and 14 benches, ate food from vending machines, and did all they could to keep their daughter from seeing their sadness, 15 16 exhaustion, and frustration, and WHEREAS, all around them, the Hills saw other parents 17 doing the same thing and learned that many of the families had 18 19 traveled great distances to bring their children to the 20 medical facility, only to find the high cost of hotel rooms 21 prohibitive, and 22 WHEREAS, very few institutions at that time provided sufficient accommodations for such families, and, determined 23 to help other families experiencing the same emotional and 24 25 financial traumas as his own, Hill rallied the support of his teammates to raise funds to help remedy the situation, and 26 27 WHEREAS, the Philadelphia Eagles organization offered 28 its support to Dr. Audrey Evans, head of the pediatric 29 oncology unit at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, whose dream for a house to serve as temporary residence for families 30 31 of children being treated at her hospital, along with the 1

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efforts of Fred Hill and the McDonald's Corporation, led to 1 2 the first Ronald McDonald House, and 3 WHEREAS, Hill enlisted the help of his teammates and 4 the local McDonald's restaurant franchisees to raise funds to 5 purchase and renovate the first Ronald McDonald House, and б WHEREAS, when this unlikely partnership was formed 7 between an NFL team, a children's hospital, and a restaurant 8 chain, none of its members could have imagined that their dream of a "home-away-from-home" for families of seriously ill 9 10 children would grow to become an international phenomenon, and 11 WHEREAS, by 1979, ten more Ronald McDonald Houses had 12 opened; in the next five years, local communities founded an 13 additional 60 Houses; and 53 more opened in the next five 14 years, and 15 WHEREAS, today, there are 195 Ronald McDonald Houses 16 open in 16 countries, with more than 3,000 bedrooms available for families every night and, by the end of 1999, ten new 17 Houses will open, including the first Houses in Hungary, 18 19 Malaysia, and Mexico, for a total of 205 Ronald McDonald 20 Houses in 18 countries, and WHEREAS, each Ronald McDonald House is run by a local 21 22 nonprofit organization comprised of members of the medical community, business and civic leaders, parent/volunteers, and 23 McDonald's owners/operators, supported by nearly 20,000 24 volunteers who annually donate over one million hours of their 25 26 time, providing the backbone of the program and helping with 27 all aspects of House operations, including fundraising, 28 program development, and services to families, and 29 WHEREAS, Ronald McDonald House is the cornerstone program of Ronald McDonald House Charities, a not-for-profit 30 31 organization that, to date, through its global network of 2

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local charities, has awarded nearly \$200 million in grants to children's programs worldwide, and WHEREAS, since 1974, having served more than two million family members whose children are receiving medical treatment for cancer, heart disease, organ transplants, neonatal complications, burns, and major accidents, Ronald McDonald House has created a place where parents can be with families who understand each other's situations and can provide emotional support and, in so doing, has rendered a service of tremendous compassion for millions of people in this nation and abroad, NOW, THEREFORE, Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Florida: That the House of Representatives of the State of Florida hereby recognizes and commends Ronald McDonald House Charities for a quarter of a century of exceptional humanitarian service.

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