

HOUSE COMMEMORATION NO. 1018

Introduced by: Representatives Van Gerpen, Adelstein, Bartling, Begalka, Bradford, Buckingham, Burg, Christensen, Craddock, Cutler, Davis, Deadrick (Thomas), Dykstra, Elliott, Engels, Frost, Garnos, Gillespie, Hargens, Haverly, Hennies, Hundstad, Hunhoff, Juhnke, Klaudt, Kroger, Lange, McCoy, McLaughlin, Michels, Miles, Murschel, Nesselhuf, O'Brien, Olson (Mel), Olson (Ryan), Putnam, Rhoden, Sebert, Sigdestad, Smidt, Solum, Valandra, Weems, and Williamson and Senators Kloucek, Albers, Dempster, Duenwald, Duniphan, Greenfield, Jaspers, Kleven, Kooistra, Kurtenbach, Moore, Nachtigal, Olson (Ed), and Reedy

A LEGISLATIVE COMMEMORATION, Congratulating the town of Freeman on its 125th birthday celebration.

WHEREAS, Freeman was founded when the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad crossed Hutchinson County to connect small towns to Yankton in 1879. Freeman was named rather uniquely by a confusion of signs between Menno and Freeman because the early community was settled by many Mennonite pioneers. Other sources report that when the railroad purchased land from a settler, his response in German relayed that he was released from debt and was now a "free man." Neither of these stories has been officially documented; and

WHEREAS, Christ Buechler was known as the "Father of Freeman," because as an entrepreneur, he moved his merchandise store from Yankton to Freeman when the railroad came through. Mr. Buechler ran a banking business from his home and assisted early Freeman in developing businesses to establish a large trade area; and

WHEREAS, Freeman has developed and maintained values through faith and education which is visible today with ten churches, two schools, three banks, two grocery stores, two farm implement dealerships, a weekly newspaper, a hospital, comprehensive health care, a library, a swimming pool, a golf course, two city parks, numerous manufacturing businesses, and many family friendly organizations. Freeman is home to Schmeckfest, a German-Russian ethnic celebration held each spring that involves the whole community:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT COMMEMORATED, by the Seventy-ninth Legislature of the State of South Dakota, that the town of Freeman be honored on the occasion of its 125th birthday

celebration on June 25, 26, and 27, in the year 2004.