

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 124

BY SHOULTZ

A Resolution honoring the life and work of Clair Cameron
Patterson.

WHEREAS, Clair Cameron Patterson was a world-famous
geochemist, born in Mitchellville, Iowa, on June 2,
1922; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Patterson attended a small high school
with fewer than 100 students, and later graduated from
Grinnell College with a degree in chemistry; and

WHEREAS, Clair Patterson then went on to the
University of Iowa, where he completed his master of
arts thesis in molecular spectroscopy; and

WHEREAS, he then went on to work on the Manhattan
Project and later received his doctorate degree from
the University of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Clair Patterson was an energetic,
innovative, determined scientist whose pioneering work
stretched across a variety of academic disciplines,
including archaeology, meteorology, oceanography, and
environmental science, along with chemistry and
geology; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Patterson is best known for his
determination of the age of the earth by using the
uranium-lead dating method; in 1953 he calculated the
age of the earth as 4.55 billion years, a number that
stands to this day; and

WHEREAS, beginning in 1965, he drew public
attention to the problem of contamination of the
environment and the food chain from industrial lead;

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1 and

2 WHEREAS, Clair Patterson's efforts led to the
3 enactment of the federal Clean Air Act of 1970, and
4 ultimately the removal of lead from all gasoline in
5 the United States by 1986, lowering the lead level
6 contained in the blood of Americans by some 80
7 percent; NOW THEREFORE,

8 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
9 That the House of Representatives honors the
10 monumental achievements of Iowa native Clair Cameron
11 Patterson, who devoted his life to increasing our
12 knowledge and our awareness of this earth and
13 improving the environment.

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