



SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

# Proclamation

Presented this 18<sup>th</sup> day of November 2009

- WHEREAS,** on October 12, the people of the State of Illinois, and the disability community in particular, suffered a great loss with the passing of Lester Thomas Pritchard; and
- WHEREAS,** Lester Pritchard's involvement in disability issues began on the day he was born and diagnosed with cerebral palsy, giving him first-hand experience with the struggle for equality, dignity, and access; and
- WHEREAS,** Lester Pritchard's lifetime of activism began in his hometown of Galesburg, where he championed efforts to make local businesses accessible and cut sidewalk curbs to street level; and
- WHEREAS,** after graduating from the University of Illinois, Lester Pritchard went on to spend the rest of his life as a disability rights activist at the local, state, and federal levels, fighting for independence, equal rights, and opportunities for people with disabilities; and
- WHEREAS,** Lester Pritchard and his wife Barbara founded the organizations Citizens for HOMES (Housing Options Meeting Equitable Standards), to promote low-cost accessible features in new housing, and Campaign for Real Choice in Illinois, dedicated to full inclusion for people with disabilities; and
- WHEREAS,** Lester Pritchard was appointed to the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities in 1999, and in 2004 he was appointed Chairperson of the Council – one of many boards, commissions, and task forces dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with disabilities that Lester Pritchard served on; and
- WHEREAS,** Lester Pritchard was a great friend and advocate of the disability community. He was truly visionary in that he saw Illinois' disability rights movement as a civil rights struggle, empowering people with disabilities and ensuring that they are able to choose the life they wish to lead; and
- WHEREAS,** at the final meeting of the year of the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities, Lester Pritchard will be honored for his life's work. It is certainly fitting that we take the time to recognize the contributions of a man who so completely embodied the best qualities of the Land of Lincoln and dedicated his life to service to others:
- THEREFORE,** be it resolved, by the State of Illinois, that I hereby recognize the incredible legacy of Lester Thomas Pritchard, disability advocate and inspiring role model for us all.



*Pat Quinn*

Pat Quinn  
Governor, State of Illinois