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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of Eddie Williams, who passed away on May 8, 2017; and

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WHEREAS, Eddie Williams was born in Memphis, Tennessee on August 18, 1932; he served in the United States Army and graduated from the University of Illinois in 1955; and

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WHEREAS, Following his service, Eddie Williams worked as a reporter; he then became the first African American protocol officer at the United States Department of State and worked on the staffs of Senator Edward M. Kennedy and Senator Hubert Humphrey; he joined the University of Chicago as director for the Center for Policy Study in 1968 and became the vice president for public affairs; and

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WHEREAS, Eddie Williams served as president of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies (JCPES) from 1972 to 2004; he built the JCPES into one of the leading institutions in African American political thought and research; he led the JCPES in helping establish several organizations of African American elected officials and built a roster of more than 10,000 African American elected officials; and

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1           WHEREAS, Eddie Williams hosted African American elected  
2 officials every four years to assemble policy priorities to  
3 share with presidential candidates and transition teams; he  
4 also created Focus magazine in an effort to bring together  
5 African American elected officials, political activists, and  
6 scholars nationwide; he was the founding chairman of the board  
7 of the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation; and

8           WHEREAS, Eddie Williams shaped and established the first  
9 respected African American think tank/policy institute in and  
10 for Black America; his research and policy work was the basis  
11 for most African American political and civil rights gains in  
12 the post-King, pre-Obama era; and

13           WHEREAS, Eddie Williams is survived by his wife, Jearline;  
14 his son, Larry (Rangena Hotaki); his grandchildren, Samaira and  
15 Rafiq William; and his stepson, Terence A. Reddick; therefore,  
16 be it

17           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH GENERAL  
18 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
19 Eddie Williams, and extend our sincere condolences to his  
20 family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it  
21 further

22           RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be

1 presented to the family of Eddie Williams as an expression of  
2 our deepest sympathy.