



SR0733

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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 Nelsan Ellis, who passed away on July 8, 2017; and

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WHEREAS, Nelsan Ellis was born in Harvey on November 30, 1977 and moved to Bessemer, Alabama at the age of six; he returned to Illinois at the age of 14, where he attended Thornridge High School in Dolton; in 2004, he earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Juilliard's prestigious drama division; and

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WHEREAS, While at Juilliard, Nelsan Ellis wrote a semi-autobiographical play entitled "Ugly", which was performed at Juilliard and earned him a Martin E. Segal Award from the Lincoln Center; and

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WHEREAS, In 2007, Nelsan Ellis was cast as Lafayette Reynolds in the HBO series, "True Blood", a widely popular show that ran for seven seasons and 80 episodes; and

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WHEREAS, Nelsan Ellis's numerous other roles included Martin Luther King, Jr. in "Lee Daniels' The Butler" and Bobby Byrd, a longtime friend of James Brown, in the biographical drama, "Get on Up"; he also held roles in "The Soloist",

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1 "Secretariat", "The Help", "The Stanford Prison Experiment",
2 and the CBS detective series, "Elementary"; and

3 WHEREAS, Nelsan Ellis won numerous awards for his work as
4 an actor, and was nominated for many more; he won a Satellite
5 Award from the International Press Academy in 2008; his
6 nominations include a Scream Award from Spike TV in 2009, an
7 NAACP Image Award in 2011 and 2012, and a Black Reel Award from
8 the Foundation for the Augmentation of African-Americans in
9 Film in 2015; and

10 WHEREAS, Nelsan Ellis is survived by his son, grandmother,
11 father, and seven siblings; and

12 WHEREAS, Nelsan Ellis was an acclaimed actor and playwright
13 and a loving father and friend who will be missed by all; his
14 death was met with an overwhelming outpouring of condolences
15 from friends and fans around the world; therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH GENERAL
17 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the death of
18 Nelsan Ellis, and recognize his great contributions to the film
19 and television industries; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
21 presented to the family of Nelsan Ellis with our sincerest

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1 condolences.