



SR1364

LRB100 18557 ALS 33776 r

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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 William Cousins Jr., who passed away on January 20, 2018; and

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WHEREAS, Bill Cousins was born in Swiftown, Mississippi, the son of a longshoreman father; he moved with his family to Memphis, Tennessee in 1931, and then to Chicago in 1938; he attended Forrestville Elementary School and was president of the 1945 graduating class at DuSable High School; he received a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Illinois in 1948 and then a law degree from Harvard Law School in 1951; after law school, he was commissioned as a lieutenant in the Army and served in the Pacific Theater during the Korean War; while in Japan, he met Hiroko Ogawa; they married in Japan in 1953; and

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WHEREAS, Bill Cousins began working as an examining attorney for Chicago Title & Trust Co.; he then served as an assistant state's attorney; in 1961, he and three other African-American attorneys and Harvard Law School graduates formed a law firm; and

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WHEREAS, Bill Cousins led the Chatham-Avalon Park Community Council, where he worked to oppose high-rise housing

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1 in the neighborhood; he was elected alderman in 1967 and made  
2 the community viable by meeting with constituents, attending  
3 book club meetings, and effectively communicating with  
4 residents; he resigned from the City Council after he was  
5 elected to the Cook County Circuit Court in 1976; and

6 WHEREAS, Bill Cousins later served on panels that  
7 investigated two separate, deadly fire tragedies in Chicago and  
8 helped make important fire safety recommendations that were  
9 implemented; and

10 WHEREAS, Bill Cousins was known as an outstanding leader,  
11 with thoughtful insights, who never forgot his roots; he always  
12 said that if you've been given a good brain and a good body,  
13 you have a responsibility to help those less fortunate than  
14 yourself; and

15 WHEREAS, Bill Cousins was preceded in death by his wife,  
16 Hiroko; and

17 WHEREAS, Bill Cousins is survived by his daughters, Cheryl  
18 Akiko Cousins and Gail Yoshiko Cousins; his sons, Yul Cousins  
19 and Noel Cousins; and his four grandchildren; therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH GENERAL  
21 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of

1 William Cousins Jr. and extend our sincere condolences to his  
2 family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it  
3 further

4       RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
5 presented to the family of Bill Cousins as an expression of our  
6 deepest sympathy.