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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 Colonel Jill E. Morgenthaler of Mt. Prospect, who passed away on February 23, 2019; and

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WHEREAS, Colonel Morgenthaler came from a military family that often moved around the country; her father was an officer in the United States Marine Corps who served in Vietnam, and she attended seven different schools before attending college at Penn State; she was one of 83 female cadets to arrive for boot camp at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina as the inaugural class of women in the U.S. Army in 1975; and

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WHEREAS, Colonel Morgenthaler rose through the ranks and eventually became the first woman battalion commander in the 88th Regional Support Command and later the first woman brigade commander in the 84th Division; in the 1980s, her military career took her to Germany and South Korea; in the 1990s, she was sent to Bosnia and Kosovo, where she earned a humanitarian service medal for helping to resettle Kosovar refugees; in 2004, she was awarded the Bronze Star after serving ten months in Iraq; upon retirement in 2006, she was awarded the Legion of Merit; and

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WHEREAS, In her civilian capacity, Colonel Morgenthaler

1 worked for the U.S. Department of Commerce and Software  
2 Publishing Corporation before moving to Illinois, where she  
3 worked in public affairs, community outreach, and as assistant  
4 division director and emergency response manager for Argonne  
5 National Laboratory for 14 years; and

6 WHEREAS, In 2005 under then Governor Rod Blagojevich,  
7 Colonel Morgenthaler became the first woman to serve as  
8 homeland security chief for Illinois; in 2008, she ran for  
9 public office as the Democratic challenger for the 6th  
10 Congressional District, in which she won 42 percent of the  
11 vote; during the campaign, she discovered her voice and  
12 realized how her story could motivate others; she went on to  
13 give keynote addresses and seminars on leadership; in 2014, she  
14 wrote *The Courage to take Command: Leadership Lessons from A*  
15 *Military Trailblazer*; and

16 WHEREAS, Colonel Morgenthaler was also president of the  
17 National Speakers Association Illinois and a member of the  
18 National Speakers Association and Toastmasters International;  
19 and

20 WHEREAS, Colonel Morgenthaler and her husband Kerry moved  
21 to Des Plaines in 1991, where they raised their two children;  
22 after major floods near their neighborhood in 2008 and 2012,  
23 the couple moved to Mount Prospect; she was a member of St.

1 Martin's Episcopal Church in Des Plaines, where she sang in the  
2 choir; she "devoted her life to helping others be all they can  
3 be," said U. S. Senator Tammy Duckworth; Senator Duckworth also  
4 stated, "she was a leader and decorated officer who knocked  
5 down barriers in the military and motivated a generation of  
6 women through her service and her inspirational speeches"; and

7 WHEREAS, Colonel Morgenthaler was the beloved wife of Kerry  
8 Chambers, the loving mother of Neal Warren Chambers and Jamie  
9 Joyce Chambers, the fond sister of Terry (Patrick Kerins)  
10 Morgenthaler, Jeffrey (Donna) Morgenthaler, and Sharon  
11 Morgenthaler, and the dear aunt of many nieces and nephews;  
12 therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL  
14 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
15 Colonel Jill E. Morgenthaler and extend our sincere condolences  
16 to her family, friends, and all who knew and loved her; and be  
17 it further

18 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
19 presented to the family of Colonel Morgenthaler as an  
20 expression of our deepest sympathy.