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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 Nathan "Nate" "Bobo" Smalls Jr. of Danville, who passed away on July 9, 2019; and

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WHEREAS, Nate Smalls was born in Chatham County in Savannah, Georgia to Nathan and Loretta Smalls; he moved to Danville in 1969 after meeting his wife, Anita, at Danville Stadium; and

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WHEREAS, Nate Smalls was a star pitcher for the Indianapolis Clowns, a team in the last Negro Baseball Barnstorming League, from 1965 until 1986; in one legendary game, he sent all of his fielders to the dugout and proceeded to strike out the side; during barnstorming tours, he and his teammates pooled their \$3-per-person-per-day meal allowance to buy enough bread, bologna, and peanut butter to feed everyone; and

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WHEREAS, When his baseball days were over, Nate Smalls remained in Danville and worked at a grain-processing plant for 34 years; and

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WHEREAS, Nate Smalls was known as one of the Three Kings of Peace, a trio of men who worked together to reduce violence in

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1 city schools and the community; the group got its start by
2 organizing regular peace marches in troubled neighborhoods,
3 asking young people to choose peace over violence; during the
4 school year, the Three Kings of Peace made frequent visits to
5 North Ridge Middle and South View Upper Elementary schools and
6 eventually Danville High School, monitoring the students and
7 encouraging them to make positive choices in life; and

8 WHEREAS, Nate Smalls was one of the primary organizers of a
9 summer basketball league for young people at Garfield Park, and
10 two basketball courts were dedicated in his honor; he
11 volunteered to run the gymnasium at the Boys and Girls Club,
12 and when the Club's basketball league started, he served as a
13 coach and volunteer referee; he will best be remembered as an
14 ambassador of peace for the young people of Vermilion County;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, Nate Smalls was preceded in death by his parents;
17 his daughter, Lukresia; his grandson, Nathan; his
18 great-granddaughter, Na'ryah; his brother, James Robe; and his
19 sister, Haddie Mae Thomas; and

20 WHEREAS, Nate Smalls is survived by his wife, Anita; his
21 daughters, Dana Williams, Leslie (Tyrone) Dunbar, and Brea
22 McGrown; his son, Darwin Baxter; his sisters-in-law, Bea Brown,
23 Ellen Brooks, Bertha Brandon, and Alice (Lee) Shields; his

1 favorite aunt, Angie Robe, and uncle, Johnnie Brown; his aunts,
2 Patricia Ann Rutledge and Roslyn Robe; and many nieces,
3 nephews, cousins, friends, and loved ones; therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL
5 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
6 Nathan "Nate" "Bobo" Smalls Jr. and extend our sincere
7 condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved
8 him; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
10 presented to the family of Nate Smalls as an expression of our
11 deepest sympathy.