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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 Tara Feldman, who passed away on April 9, 2010; and

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WHEREAS, Tara Feldman was born on July 4, 1975; she was the loving mother of 3 children, Travis, Leo, and Maya, and Kona the dog; the loving sister of Dustin, Mike and Kori; and the beloved daughter of Alan and Joyci Feldman; and

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WHEREAS, Tara Feldman graduated from Butler Junior High in Oak Brook in 1989 and from Downers Grove North High School in 1993; and

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WHEREAS, Tara Feldman's extensive academic background included a Bachelor of Science degree in biology and a Master of Arts degree in teaching from Tufts University; she also held adjunct faculty status at Aurora University and the Miami University of Ohio; and

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WHEREAS, Tara Feldman launched her career in education and science as an intern at the Museum of Science in Boston; she subsequently worked as a science and math teacher at Beacon High School in Brookline, Massachusetts and as a science editor at Pearson Prentice Hall and Scott Foresman; and

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1 WHEREAS, Tara Feldman was an artist who loved to paint,
2 draw, and create; she was also a self-proclaimed "science nerd"
3 who enjoyed watching the Discovery Channel and learning about
4 animals; and

5 WHEREAS, Tara Feldman was a remarkable young woman whose
6 moral compass was pointed in the right direction toward helping
7 and inspiring people; and

8 WHEREAS, Through her work at the Chicago Zoological
9 Society, Tara Feldman had a real and tangible impact in the
10 lives of students with disabilities, Chicago Public School
11 teachers, and young and aspiring biologists, scientists, and
12 conservationists; and

13 WHEREAS, Tara Feldman understood that the conservation
14 movement must speak to and hear from all ages, ethnicities,
15 educational and socioeconomic levels, and abilities; she
16 developed award-winning conservation leadership programs at
17 Brookfield Zoo around that notion; and

18 WHEREAS, Tara Feldman's initial work at Brookfield Zoo
19 focused on the education and empowerment of students with
20 disabilities; and

1 WHEREAS, Because of her interest and experience in the
2 special education field, Tara Feldman first worked at
3 Brookfield Zoo as an instructor with "Every Student is a
4 Scientist", an inclusive educational program for students with
5 disabilities that utilizes interactive tablet PCs and hands-on
6 learning activities that are focused on conservation; and

7 WHEREAS, Building off of her success with "Every Student is
8 a Scientist", Tara Feldman worked with students with
9 disabilities from Riverside-Brookfield High School, where she
10 coached them on their soft skills and time management; she then
11 placed them in volunteer and employment positions at the zoo
12 while showering them with love, praise, and continued support;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Tara Feldman then paired up with another member of
15 the Brookfield Zoo family, Agnes Kovacs, and launched the
16 Chicago Zoological Society's comprehensive science training
17 program for Chicago Public School partners; and

18 WHEREAS, Tara Feldman not only launched the Levels of
19 Engagement teacher training program, but nurtured and
20 developed it into a national model that was conferred with a
21 national education award from the Association of Zoos and
22 Aquariums; and

1 WHEREAS, The Chicago Public School teachers and principals
2 with whom Tara Feldman worked can attest to her brilliance,
3 creativity, and passion; and

4 WHEREAS, Tara Feldman went on to create the summer Science
5 Fair Boot Camps, in addition to Science Fairs for Chicago
6 Public Schools, to give Chicago Public School teachers and
7 students the opportunity to improve their understanding and
8 development in the inquiry process; and

9 WHEREAS, Tara Feldman helped re-shape and re-launch the
10 Classroom Connections classes at Brookfield Zoo, having helped
11 create over a dozen classes that were participatory,
12 student-centered, and inquiry-based, with more than 20,000
13 students participating in these classes annually; and

14 WHEREAS, Tara Feldman worked tirelessly to make informal
15 science learning fun and accessible for students, families, and
16 teachers, working to expand the role of informal environments
17 in educating students and adults about science; and

18 WHEREAS, Because of Tara Feldman's hard work and
19 dedication, there are 3rd grade students who understand complex
20 terms like "habitat restoration" and "deforestation" and who
21 see themselves as conservation leaders; there are also many
22 teachers who have improved their ability to teach and reach

1 students and improve science learning through inquiry-based
2 teaching tools; therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL
4 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with
5 her family and friends, the passing of Tara Feldman; and be it
6 further

7 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
8 presented to the family of Tara Feldman as an expression of our
9 sympathy.