



HR0167

LRB104 12637 LAW 23330 r

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of soul
4 singer-songwriter Jerry Butler of Chicago, who passed away on
5 February 20, 2025; and

6 WHEREAS, Jerry Butler was born in Sunflower, Mississippi
7 on December 8, 1939; as a young child, he moved to Chicago with
8 his family; while residing in Chicago's Cabrini-Green housing
9 project, he met Curtis Mayfield at the age of 13; together,
10 they sang in a church choir before pursuing musical careers,
11 joining The Roosters, which was later renamed The Impressions;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, Jerry Butler became the first lead singer of the
14 newly-named The Impressions, leading to another name change,
15 Jerry Butler & The Impressions; he played an integral part in
16 the songwriting of the group's first hit, 1958's "For Your
17 Precious Love", which was based on a poem he wrote in high
18 school; he also sang lead on the group's follow-up hit, "Come
19 Back My Love", before pursuing a solo career; and

20 WHEREAS, Jerry Butler initially struggled as a solo
21 artist, but his career achieved true success after he and
22 Curtis Mayfield reunited to write "He Will Break Your Heart",

1 a song that went No. 7 on the Billboard Hot 100 and was later
2 covered by Tony Orlando & Dawn as the renamed "He Don't Love
3 You (Like I Love You)"; he continued to perform many other
4 popular singles in the 1960s and 1970s, including "Moon
5 River", "Make It Easy on Yourself", "Smile", "Hey, Western
6 Union Man", "Ain't Understanding Mellow", "Close to You", and
7 "I Wanna Do It to You"; he also co-wrote such chart-topping
8 hits as "Only the Strong Survive" and "I've Been Loving You Too
9 Long"; as his musical career developed, he became known for
10 his nickname, "The Iceman", which was bestowed on him by a
11 Philadelphia DJ who was impressed by his smooth voice and
12 stage presence; and

13 WHEREAS, Jerry Butler later embarked on a new career as a
14 public servant when he was elected to the Cook County Board of
15 Commissioners, representing Chicago, in 1986; he remained on
16 the board for more than 30 years, chairing the Health and
17 Hospitals Committee and serving on many other committees,
18 including Criminal Justice, Roads and Bridges, and Finance;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, Jerry Butler was the recipient of a number of
21 accolades, including being inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall
22 of Fame as a member of The Impressions in 1991; and

23 WHEREAS, Jerry Butler will be remembered for his talents,

1 the indelible mark he left on music, and his dedication to the
2 City of Chicago; therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
4 HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
5 we mourn the passing of soul singer-songwriter Jerry Butler
6 and extend our sincere condolences to his family, friends, and
7 all who knew and loved him; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
9 presented to the family of Jerry Butler as an expression of our
10 deepest sympathy.