



HR0598

LRB104 17561 LAW 30989 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of former
4 Illinois State Representative and City of Springfield
5 Alderperson Irvin Frank "Irv" Smith, who passed away on
6 November 24, 2025; and

7 WHEREAS, Rep. Smith was born to Frank I. and Emelia Marker
8 Smith in Springfield on September 22, 1929; he completed
9 bachelor's and master's degrees in geology and geography, a
10 master's degree in educational administration, and
11 postgraduate work at Illinois State University and the
12 University of Wisconsin; he married Joan Barbara Reilly at St.
13 Joseph's Church in Springfield in 1952, and they relocated to
14 Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, where he served as a member of the
15 United States Army Signal Corps during the Korean War, for
16 which he later attended an Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. in
17 2016; and

18 WHEREAS, Rep. Smith touched many lives, first as a teacher
19 and coach at Harvard Park and Jefferson, and then as principal
20 of Staley and Iles Schools; when he arrived at Iles in 1962, he
21 noticed the basketball nets had been removed from the
22 playground to discourage children from playing after hours; he
23 immediately put the nets up and organized an intra-city

1 basketball competition among the grade schools in Springfield,
2 which Iles won the first year; through his efforts, students
3 learned sportsmanship and pride; over the years, he kept in
4 touch with many of his former students; and

5 WHEREAS, Rep. Smith served as chairman of the Springfield
6 Recreation Commission, became the principal organizer and
7 first president of the Springfield Community Action Agency to
8 combat poverty in Springfield, and was a force behind the
9 beginning of the Head Start Program in Springfield Public
10 Schools; he served as Sangamon County Regional Superintendent
11 of Schools from 1974 to 1980; he further served his community
12 as vice chairman of the Sangamon County Board, as a member of
13 the Illinois House of Representatives from 1980 to 1982, and
14 as an alderperson for the City of Springfield from 1987 to
15 2007; and

16 WHEREAS, Rep. Smith was dedicated to the Republican Party
17 and welcomed people from all walks of life into the political
18 organization; he became chairman of the Sangamon County
19 Republican Party in 1983, serving until 2005; he served as
20 chairman of the Illinois County Chairman's Association and as
21 a delegate to the Republican National Convention six times
22 from 1984 to 2004; under his leadership, the first female
23 Mayor of Springfield, first female chairman of the Sangamon
24 County Board, and the first African American female were

1 elected to local office; and

2 WHEREAS, Rep. Smith taught thousands of children how to
3 swim and compete during his lifetime, beginning with a summer
4 job as pool manager and coach of Illini CC from 1958 to 1966;
5 he organized and coached the first YWCA Women's Swim Team in
6 1959, culminating with the YWCA National Swim Meet being held
7 at Eisenhower Pool in Springfield in 1971, and he led the YWCA
8 and YMCA swim teams after they merged in 1972, becoming the SPY
9 Swim Team; he organized and coached Colony West Swim Club from
10 1967 to 1970, and his team won the City Championship Meet in
11 1970; he purchased the Olympic Club in 1971 and later
12 purchased the North Suburban Aquatic Club, or Veteran's
13 Memorial Pool, for long course training; he coached the
14 Griffin High School swim team with his friend, Mike Schwartz,
15 and he was named IHSA District Coach of the Year in 1981 and
16 1982; he was also a member of the International Swimming Hall
17 of Fame in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, where he took his teams to
18 train during Christmas break; he was inducted into the
19 Springfield Sports Hall of Fame as a Friend of Sports in 1999;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, Rep. Smith was the longest consistent member of
22 the Springfield YMCA at the time of his passing, beginning in
23 1940; he initially played handball, becoming an 11-time city
24 champion; he held many leadership positions over the years,

1 including as a member of the YMCA Board from 1966 to 1982,
2 where he also served as chairman, as an active member of YMCA
3 Membership Roundups, serving as "Big Boss" in 1977, as a
4 member and chairman of the YMCA Board of Trustees, and as a
5 charter member of the Strong Kids Fund; and

6 WHEREAS, Rep. Smith had a long, productive, and fulfilling
7 life; he will be remembered for selflessly giving his time and
8 talent to others and for encouraging everyone to realize their
9 potential; and

10 WHEREAS, Rep. Smith was preceded in death by his wife,
11 Joan Reilly Smith; his parents; his in-laws, Walter R. and
12 Edith Johnson Reilly; his sister, Clara L. Bennett; and his
13 sisters-in-law, Florence Nizzio Smith and Mary Alice Smith;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Rep. Smith is survived by his son, Irvin F.
16 "Chip" Smith; his daughters, April Elaine Smith and Sharmin
17 Smith Doering; two grandchildren; his son-in-law, Gary
18 Doering; his brother, John Mark Smith; and two nieces and a
19 nephew; therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
21 HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
22 we mourn the passing of former Illinois State Representative

1 and City of Springfield Alderperson Irvin Frank "Irv" Smith
2 and extend our sincere condolences to his family, friends, and
3 all who knew and loved him; and be it further

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