



SR0260

LRB104 13143 LAW 25270 r

1 SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened
3 to learn of the death of Wayne Calhoun "Doc" Temple, the dean
4 of Abraham Lincoln scholars, who passed away on March 31,
5 2025; and

6 WHEREAS, Doc Temple, the son of Howard and Ruby Temple,
7 was born on a small family farm near Richwood, Ohio on February
8 5, 1924; he began his education in a one-room schoolhouse and
9 graduated as valedictorian from his high school, during which
10 he ran on a championship boys' 4 x 1500-yard relay team; he
11 also played clarinet in a traveling men's band; and

12 WHEREAS, Doc Temple began attending Ohio State University
13 in 1941 before being drafted into the U.S. Army Air Corps; he
14 was sent to Urbana for training as an engineer and then to
15 North Carolina for special training, which was followed by
16 being sent to Kansas for ordnance production; he was stationed
17 in Europe from 1945 to 1946; he served as a technician third
18 grade, the equivalent of a sergeant today, in the Signal Corps
19 at age 21; he helped install new airfields and radio
20 communications, some of it for use by General-in-Chief
21 Eisenhower; he was awarded the Bronze Star for a one-man
22 battle with a Luftwaffe pilot who strafed his camp on the
23 Franco-German border in the last weeks of the war; and

1 WHEREAS, Doc Temple, after World War II, earned his
2 Bachelor of Arts in History and English from the University of
3 Illinois; while there, he was the graduate student and
4 research assistant of Prof. James G. "Jim" Randall, the first
5 academic historian of Lincoln, until the professor's death in
6 1953; while serving the professor, he helped him write volume
7 3 of the tetralogy, Lincoln the President, published between
8 1945 to 1955, and he helped draft volume 4; he also helped Ruth
9 Randall with her popular and junior histories about the
10 Lincolns and women of the Civil War era, and he corresponded
11 with her until her death in 1971; and

12 WHEREAS, Doc Temple published his first book in 1958,
13 titled Indian Villages of the Illinois Country, which was
14 commissioned by Thorne Deuel of the Illinois State Museum and
15 is still considered a model of research and analysis; he and
16 his wife, Lois McDonald Temple, then relocated to Harrogate,
17 Tennessee, where he led the history department of Lincoln
18 Memorial University; while there, he edited the Lincoln
19 Herald, engaging Lloyd Ostendorf to serve as illustrator and
20 making it the best periodical in the field; he remained as
21 editor until the mid-1970s, long after he was brought on the
22 staff of the Illinois State Archives in 1964; and

23 WHEREAS, Doc Temple served as chief deputy director of the

1 Illinois State Archives for decades; his position entailed
2 writing, public speaking, and helping answer questions for an
3 average of 150 people per month who contacted him by phone, by
4 mail, or in person; during his tenure, he became known for his
5 skill at land surveying, which proved invaluable for the dozen
6 survey questions a month that came in on that topic, alongside
7 his ability in tracing the course of legislative bills old or
8 new, gubernatorial proclamations, or judicial rulings; he
9 mastered the use of old registers, microfilm, and the
10 typewriter, but he never embraced computers; he was recognized
11 for his value to the State and the public by nine Secretaries
12 of State, of both parties, who kept him on staff until he
13 retired in 2016; and

14 WHEREAS, Doc Temple's published works, including books,
15 articles, and booklets, remain a testament to his great energy
16 and skill; he wrote about the Lincoln Home in By Square and
17 Compasses, which was published in 1984 and updated in 2002;
18 with his second wife, Sunderine "Sandy", who served as a head
19 docent at the Old State Capitol for 40 years, he wrote
20 Illinois' Fifth Capitol: The House that Lincoln Built and
21 Caused to Be Rebuilt (1837-1865) in 1988, the standard work on
22 its initiation, contracts, costs, furnishing, refurbishing,
23 and historic moments, such as Lincoln's 1858 "House Divided"
24 speech; in shorter works, he found or recovered the stories of
25 people high and low, including Mariah Vance, the Lincolns'

1 Black laundress, and Abraham Lincoln's formal commission as an
2 Illinois militia officer after the Black Hawk War of 1832; he
3 authored possibly his most enduring book in 1995, Abraham
4 Lincoln: From Skeptic to Prophet, which served as a religious
5 study and a biography of the Lincoln family; he also supported
6 local history projects with a number of individuals and
7 entities, including Phil Wagner, John Eden, the Masonic Lodge,
8 and several towns; and

9 WHEREAS, Doc Temple was named a regent by the Lincoln
10 Academy of Illinois in the 1960s, and he was later elected a
11 laureate, the highest honor in the State, in 2009; after
12 helping to reactivate the 114th Illinois Volunteer Infantry of
13 the Civil War era in 1969, he rose in its ranks from lieutenant
14 colonel to full general, presiding at dozens of ceremonies;
15 nationally, he was a member of the U.S. Civil War Centennial
16 Commission from 1960 to 1965, and he was invited to recite the
17 Gettysburg Address on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial with
18 President Nixon and other officials in 1971 and then to speak
19 to the U.S. Senate about the Lincoln boys' Scottish-born
20 tutor, Alexander Williamson; he was also present for the
21 commissioning of the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Abraham Lincoln
22 in 1988; and

23 WHEREAS, Doc Temple had the honor of being immortalized in
24 Alan E. Hunter's 2025 oral-history-as-life-study, Thursdays

1 with Doc, and some of his best 500 to 600 articles are being
2 collected into a book edited by Steven Rogstad; his legacy and
3 work will continue to educate and inspire Lincoln scholars for
4 ages to come; and

5 WHEREAS, Doc Temple was preceded in death by his wife,
6 Sandy; his first wife, Lois; and by his parents; therefore, be
7 it

8 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL
9 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
10 Wayne Calhoun "Doc" Temple, the dean of Abraham Lincoln
11 scholars, and extend our sincere condolences to his family,
12 friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
14 presented to the family of Doc Temple as an expression of our
15 deepest sympathy.