



SR0272

LRB104 13376 MST 25701 r

1 SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened
3 to learn of the death of former Illinois State Representative
4 Charles Alphonse "Chuck" Hartke, who passed away on April 13,
5 2025; and

6 WHEREAS, Rep. Hartke was born to Alphonse and Sophia
7 Hartke on May 7, 1944; he graduated from Teutopolis High
8 School in 1962; he married Kathryn L. Hoene at St. Mary's of
9 Help Catholic Church in Green Creek on August 10, 1963; he
10 served his country in the U.S. Army from 1966 to 1968 during
11 the Vietnam War and was stationed in Quang Tri, Vietnam as a
12 field medic with the rank of E5 sergeant, overseeing triage
13 operations; and

14 WHEREAS, Rep. Hartke was a dedicated full-time farmer in
15 Effingham County from the time he returned from Vietnam until
16 his appointment to the Illinois House of Representatives; he
17 was a skilled grain farmer, raising corn and soybeans, and
18 also managed livestock, raising both swine and sheep; he took
19 immense pride in his work and was known for his
20 forward-thinking approach to agriculture; he was one of the
21 first farmers in Effingham County to implement a slatted-floor
22 hog operation, reflecting his commitment to innovation and
23 animal welfare; and

1 WHEREAS, Rep. Hartke was deeply involved in his local
2 community; he first participated in zoning efforts for
3 Effingham County and was later appointed to the Regional
4 County Planning Commission; he served on the Effingham County
5 Board from 1971 to 1974; he was chairman of the Effingham
6 County Democratic Central Committee from 1978 to 1985 and
7 served as a delegate to the Illinois State Democratic
8 Convention in 1978, 1980, 1982, and 1984; and

9 WHEREAS, Rep. Hartke was deeply involved in local and
10 state politics before his time in the Illinois General
11 Assembly; he served as chairperson for the Effingham County
12 Democrats from 1976 to 1984, where he encouraged younger
13 generations to become involved through the Young Democrats of
14 Effingham County; he also served as the precinct committee
15 person for Effingham County-St. Francis from 1972 to 2003 and
16 as state central committeeman for Illinois' 19th District from
17 1992 to 2000; and

18 WHEREAS, Rep. Hartke was appointed to the Illinois House
19 of Representatives in January 1985, where he served with
20 distinction for nine terms until May 2003; he was named
21 assistant majority leader in 1997, a position he held through
22 the remainder of his time in the House; he was well known for
23 his approachable leadership style and deep connection to his

1 constituents, and one of his most beloved traditions was
2 hosting the annual Beer & Brat fundraiser at the former Green
3 Lantern Restaurant; and

4 WHEREAS, Rep. Hartke was appointed Director of the
5 Illinois Department of Agriculture after his time in the State
6 legislature; his deep roots in farming and agriculture made
7 him a natural fit for the position, and he continued to
8 advocate for rural communities and Illinois farmers until
9 stepping down on February 29, 2008; and

10 WHEREAS, Rep. Hartke remained active in state affairs by
11 joining the Illinois lobbying firm Morrill & Fiedler, LLC,
12 where he continued to lend his voice and expertise to issues
13 close to his heart; and

14 WHEREAS, Rep. Hartke, in retirement, put his time and
15 talent into building a greenhouse, where he cultivated a wide
16 variety of plants and vegetables and offered them to the
17 community in exchange for 100% donations to CSS (Community
18 Support Systems) in Teutopolis; he was a lifelong member of
19 St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in Teutopolis, Knights
20 of Columbus Council #2874, and American Legion Post 924; and

21 WHEREAS, Rep. Hartke was preceded in death by his wife,
22 Kathryn; his parents; his sisters, Mary Lou Vahling and Elvira

1 Verdeyen; and his brothers, Gerald and Francis Hartke; and

2 WHEREAS, Rep. Hartke is survived by his fiancée, Brenda
3 Holmes; his son, Christopher (Beth) Hartke; his daughter,
4 Kimberly (Patrick) Deters; his grandchildren, Ryan Deters,
5 Rachael (Curtis) Meuth, Jaelen (Rodrigo) Deters-Camargo,
6 Madeline (Jordan) Ratermann, Anna (Mark) Wendell, and Jack
7 Hartke; his great-grandson, Luke Wendell; his siblings, Margie
8 Clayton Apke, Sally Wakefield, Patricia (Bob) Poston, Phillip
9 (Carol) Hartke, and Michael (Eileen) Hartke; his
10 sisters-in-law, Charlene (Jerry) Hartke, Joan (Frank) Hartke,
11 Joyce (Raymond) Vahling, Dolores (Charlie) Kroeger, and
12 Bernice Dasenbrock; and his brother-in-law, Henry (Lois)
13 Hoene; therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL
15 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
16 former Illinois State Representative Charles Alphonse "Chuck"
17 Hartke and extend our sincere condolences to his family,
18 friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
20 presented to the family of Rep. Hartke as an expression of our
21 deepest sympathy.