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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 Shozo Sato, professor emeritus of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, who passed away on May 3, 2025; and

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WHEREAS, Prof. Sato was born in Kobe, Japan on May 18, 1933; he studied music, sumi-e painting, calligraphy, kabuki, and Japanese tea ceremony, among other traditional crafts, under the guidance of masters, such as Nakamura Kanzaburo XVII and Kishimoto Kosen, in Kamakura and Tokyo; he earned a degree in fine arts from Bunka Gakuen University in Tokyo; and

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WHEREAS, Prof. Sato originally came to Illinois as an artist-in-residence at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) in 1964, where he taught classes on traditional Japanese arts, aesthetics, and culture; recognizing the need for cultural arts education to build cultural bridges, he committed the rest of his life to teaching in the United States; and

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WHEREAS, Prof. Sato was the founding director of the Japanese Arts and Culture Program at UIUC and the visionary creator behind Japan House, a space dedicated to teaching traditional Japanese arts in an authentic Japanese

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1 environment, which he founded at UIUC in 1976; through sharing
2 his profound understanding of Japanese traditional arts and
3 actively participating in contemporary American arts, he hoped
4 to sow seeds of worldwide peace, understanding, and mutual
5 respect; and

6 WHEREAS, Prof. Sato was the author of definitive texts on
7 calligraphy and ikebana flower arranging as well as
8 adaptations of several classics of Western theater in a
9 traditional kabuki style, which transfixed audiences at
10 Krannert Center for the Performing Arts and stages the world
11 over; and

12 WHEREAS, Prof. Sato was internationally celebrated for his
13 mastery of traditional Japanese arts, and his accolades
14 include the Japan America Society of Chicago's inaugural
15 Cultural Achievement Award in 2003 and the Order of the Sacred
16 Treasure by the Emperor of Japan in 2004 in recognition of his
17 exceptional contributions to promoting Japanese culture
18 abroad; and

19 WHEREAS, Prof. Sato, respectfully referred to as "Sato
20 Sensei" by his legion of former students, was cherished for
21 his inexhaustible dynamism, audacious generosity, elegance,
22 sparkling intellect, unimpeachable taste, and gently bombastic
23 humor; and

1 WHEREAS, Prof. Sato was a teacher, an artist, a director,
2 an author, and a cultural ambassador who profoundly shaped the
3 cultural ties between Japan and the United States and whose
4 work will continue to inspire for generations to come; and

5 WHEREAS, Prof. Sato is survived by his brother, Tomoyasu;
6 his sisters, Yoshiko and Shitsuko; and a host of nieces,
7 nephews, close friends, colleagues, and students; therefore,
8 be it

9 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL
10 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
11 Shozo Sato, professor emeritus of the University of Illinois
12 Urbana-Champaign, and extend our sincere condolences to his
13 family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it
14 further

15 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
16 presented to the family of Prof. Sato as an expression of our
17 deepest sympathy.