



SR0501

LRB104 16120 LAW 29450 r

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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 Bishop Joseph Hosea Johnson of Peoria, who passed away on October 22, 2025; and

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WHEREAS, Bishop Johnson was born to Charlie and Letha Mae (Smith) Johnson in Benoit, Mississippi on July 24, 1935, and he was one of 17 children born to his parents; he committed to his faith at the age of 12; he relocated to Peoria at the age of 18, where he met and married Annie Jo Hunter, and they had two sons, Joel and Jonathan; he was called to a life of ministry after joining New Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, leading him to study at Chicago Baptist Institute for four years; he later continued his theological studies at the University of Minnesota and Harvard College in California; and

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WHEREAS, Bishop Johnson, following his return to Peoria, served as a community worker for the State of Illinois Department of Corrections, working with troubled youth and becoming a probation officer after 18 months; he was promoted to director of Juvenile Court Services three years later, becoming the first African American to be appointed to that position and serving for 37 years; and

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WHEREAS, Bishop Johnson began his pastoral history as an

1 interim pastor with Star of Hope Full Gospel Church, formerly
2 Star of Hope Missionary Baptist Church, in October 1967; he
3 was ordained and installed as the permanent pastor in March
4 1968; at the same time, he also fulfilled other pastoral
5 duties at Peoria Christian Church and First United Methodist
6 Church; under his dynamic and life-changing leadership, Star
7 of Hope saw and hosted countless miracles of salvation,
8 healing, and deliverance; and

9 WHEREAS, Bishop Johnson served as a role model in the
10 community and a beacon from within the church; he participated
11 in the Cursillo Movement for 31 years, having the opportunity
12 to minister at 39 prison sites in Illinois; his ministry also
13 reached outside the United States for more than 40 years,
14 touching Liberia, Trinidad, and Tobago; and

15 WHEREAS, Bishop Johnson was an extremely loving and giving
16 man to countless individuals, serving as the foster father to
17 many young men and as a religious mentor to a multitude of
18 young men and women; he helped in sending 30 students to
19 college and purchased 12 homes and 33 cars for others; he also
20 donated funds to many local churches and community
21 organizations; and

22 WHEREAS, Bishop Johnson was preceded in death by his
23 parents; his son, Joel Johnson; his foster son, Ralph

1 Wrightner Stuckey; and 14 siblings; and

2 WHEREAS, Bishop Johnson is survived by his son, Jonathan
3 "John" Johnson Sr.; four children whom he loved as his own,
4 Roderick "Rod" Jordan, Daniel (Elizabeth) Billberry, Kenton
5 Young, and State Representative Jehan (Derrick) Gordon-Booth;
6 his siblings, Willie Johnson and Bernice Johnson; six
7 grandchildren; and a host of great-grandchildren, foster
8 children, nieces, and nephews; his extended family; his church
9 family; and his friends; therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL
11 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
12 Bishop Joseph Hosea Johnson and extend our sincere condolences
13 to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be
14 it further

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