



SR0523

LRB104 16604 ECR 30004 r

1 SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened
3 to learn of the death of Ronald "Ron" Bean; and

4 WHEREAS, Ron Bean moved to Park Forest in 1969 as he was
5 drawn to its reputation as a community where residents of all
6 races could live, work, and grow together; and

7 WHEREAS, Ron Bean quickly became an active and
8 conscientious supporter of Park Forest, earning the trust of
9 residents and colleagues through his thoughtful leadership and
10 commitment to service; and

11 WHEREAS, Ron Bean was first elected as a trustee for the
12 Village of Park Forest in 1974, demonstrating early his
13 dedication to responsible governance and community progress;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Ron Bean made history when he was elected Village
16 President of Park Forest in 1981, becoming the first African
17 American person in Illinois to be elected to office by a
18 predominantly white population, a significant milestone and
19 testament to his character, integrity, and the respect he
20 commanded; and

1 WHEREAS, Ron Bean was widely admired for his calm, steady,
2 and gentlemanly leadership throughout his presidency from 1981
3 to 1986, particularly during times of tension or public
4 disagreement; and

5 WHEREAS, Under Ron Bean's guidance, Park Forest addressed
6 many pressing infrastructure needs, including the repair and
7 modernization of aging water, sewer, and utility systems that
8 required major and costly upgrades, actions vital to the
9 long-term stability of the community; and

10 WHEREAS, Ron Bean also navigated significant economic
11 challenges, including the decline of the Park Forest Plaza
12 following development of nearby competing retail centers;
13 despite these difficulties, he remained committed to
14 responsible redevelopment and commercial revitalization,
15 supporting efforts that laid the groundwork for future
16 economic recovery; and

17 WHEREAS, Ron Bean championed redevelopment efforts at key
18 village commercial centers and supported early tax increment
19 financing strategies to spur investment, demonstrating
20 foresight and an unwavering belief in the potential of Park
21 Forest and the greater South Suburbs; and

22 WHEREAS, Ron Bean was a leader who valued culture,

1 community, and quality of life, contributing his time and
2 expertise to regional organizations, including the Illinois
3 Philharmonic Orchestra, and supporting initiatives, including
4 senior housing developments, such as the Garden House, and
5 community events and festivals that strengthened civic pride;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, Ron Bean's commitment to education was
8 exceptional; he served on the Matteson School District 162
9 Board of Education for 31 years, including as president, and
10 he was a founding member and president of the Southland
11 College Prep Board of Directors; and

12 WHEREAS, Ron Bean was a devoted advocate for students,
13 working tirelessly to ensure that children received the
14 opportunities, resources, and high-quality education they
15 deserved; his leadership shaped the academic foundation of
16 Matteson School District 162 and Southland College Prep and
17 positively influenced generations of young people; and

18 WHEREAS, Ron Bean was known for his kindness, optimism,
19 and belief in the goodness and potential of others; he
20 uplifted every room he entered, and his presence in civic and
21 educational spaces inspired confidence, collaboration, and
22 hope; and

1 WHEREAS, Ron Bean affirmed that Park Forest residents were
2 capable of looking beyond the issue of race or national origin
3 in a 1982 report by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, a
4 reflection of both his lived experience and his unwavering
5 faith in community progress; and

6 WHEREAS, The passing of Ron Bean is a profound loss to the
7 residents of Park Forest, the students and families of
8 Matteson School District 162 and Southland College Prep, and
9 the many organizations and individuals who benefited from his
10 service, leadership, and generosity; therefore, be it

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

16 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
17 presented to the family of Ron Bean as an expression of our
18 deepest sympathy.