



SR0532

LRB104 16543 MST 29941 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 Viola Ford Fletcher, the oldest living survivor of the Tulsa Race Massacre, at the age of 111; and

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WHEREAS, On May 31, 1921, a white mob laid waste to Tulsa, Oklahoma's Greenwood neighborhood, a thriving Black-owned business district, destroying approximately 35 blocks within 16 hours and arresting thousands of Black residents, while robbing, beating, and killing others; and

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WHEREAS, Matters were exacerbated by insurance companies that denied many claims for what today would be tens of millions of dollars in property damage, including the destruction of two Black hospitals and 1,256 residences; and

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WHEREAS, Viola Fletcher and other living survivors pursued a lawsuit against the city of Tulsa and other related departments, alleging they were complicit in the 1921 massacre and that its effects were still being felt today; and

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WHEREAS, Viola Fletcher was interviewed numerous times about her experiences and co-authored a memoir with her grandson, Don't Let Them Bury My Story, in 2023, representing a history she and family believed the country was eager to

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1 forget; and

2 WHEREAS, Viola Fletcher was affectionately known as
3 "Mother Fletcher" and loved life and people; therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL
5 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the death of
6 Viola Ford Fletcher, the oldest living survivor of the Tulsa
7 Race Massacre, at the age of 111; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
9 presented to the family of Viola Fletcher as a symbol of our
10 respect and esteem.