



SR0535

LRB104 16564 LAW 29962 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 former Illinois State Representative and City of Springfield Alderperson Irvin Frank "Irv" Smith, who passed away on November 24, 2025; and

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WHEREAS, Rep. Smith was born to Frank I. and Emelia Marker Smith in Springfield on September 22, 1929; he completed bachelor's and master's degrees in geology and geography, a master's degree in educational administration, and postgraduate work at Illinois State University and the University of Wisconsin; he married Joan Barbara Reilly at St. Joseph's Church in Springfield in 1952, and they relocated to Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, where he served as a member of the United States Army Signal Corps during the Korean War, for which he later attended an Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. in 2016; and

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WHEREAS, Rep. Smith touched many lives, first as a teacher and coach at Harvard Park and Jefferson, and then as principal of Staley and Iles Schools; when he arrived at Iles in 1962, he noticed the basketball nets had been removed from the playground to discourage children from playing after hours; he immediately put the nets up and organized an intra-city basketball competition among the grade schools in Springfield,

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1 which Iles won the first year; through his efforts, students
2 learned sportsmanship and pride; over the years, he kept in
3 touch with many of his former students; and

4 WHEREAS, Rep. Smith served as chairman of the Springfield
5 Recreation Commission, became the principal organizer and
6 first president of the Springfield Community Action Agency to
7 combat poverty in Springfield, and was a force behind the
8 beginning of the Head Start Program in Springfield Public
9 Schools; he served as Sangamon County Regional Superintendent
10 of Schools from 1974 to 1980; he further served his community
11 as vice chairman of the Sangamon County Board, as a member of
12 the Illinois House of Representatives from 1980 to 1982, and
13 as an alderperson for the City of Springfield from 1987 to
14 2007; and

15 WHEREAS, Rep. Smith was dedicated to the Republican Party
16 and welcomed people from all walks of life into the political
17 organization; he became chairman of the Sangamon County
18 Republican Party in 1983, serving until 2005; he served as
19 chairman of the Illinois County Chairman's Association and as
20 a delegate to the Republican National Convention six times
21 from 1984 to 2004; under his leadership, the first female
22 Mayor of Springfield, the first female chairman of the
23 Sangamon County Board, and the first African American female
24 were elected to local office; and

1 WHEREAS, Rep. Smith taught thousands of children how to
2 swim and compete during his lifetime, beginning with a summer
3 job as pool manager and coach of Illini CC from 1958 to 1966;
4 he organized and coached the first YWCA women's swim team in
5 1959, culminating with the YWCA National Swim Meet being held
6 at Eisenhower Pool in Springfield in 1971, and he led the YWCA
7 and YMCA swim teams after they merged in 1972, becoming the SPY
8 swim team; he organized and coached Colony West Swim Club from
9 1967 to 1970, and his team won the City Championship Meet in
10 1970; he purchased the Olympic Club in 1971 and later
11 purchased the North Suburban Aquatic Club, or Veteran's
12 Memorial Pool, for long course training; he coached the
13 Griffin High School swim team with his friend, Mike Schwartz,
14 and he was named IHSA District Coach of the Year in 1981 and
15 1982; he was also a member of the International Swimming Hall
16 of Fame in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, where he took his teams to
17 train during Christmas break; he was inducted into the
18 Springfield Sports Hall of Fame as a Friend of Sports in 1999;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, Rep. Smith was the longest consistent member of
21 the Springfield YMCA at the time of his passing, beginning in
22 1940; he initially played handball, becoming an 11-time city
23 champion; he held many leadership positions over the years,
24 including as a member of the YMCA Board from 1966 to 1982,

1 where he also served as chairman, as an active member of YMCA
2 Membership Roundups, serving as "Big Boss" in 1977, as a
3 member and chairman of the YMCA Board of Trustees, and as a
4 charter member of the Strong Kids Fund; and

5 WHEREAS, Rep. Smith had a long, productive, and fulfilling
6 life; he will be remembered for his resilience and bravery,
7 his selfless giving of his time and talent, and his
8 encouragement of others to realize their potential; and

9 WHEREAS, Rep. Smith was preceded in death by his wife,
10 Joan Reilly Smith; his parents; his in-laws, Walter R. and
11 Edith Johnson Reilly; his sister, Clara L. Bennett; and his
12 sisters-in-law, Florence Nizzio Smith and Mary Alice Smith;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Rep. Smith is survived by his son, Irvin F.
15 "Chip" Smith; his daughters, April Elaine Smith and Sharmin
16 Smith Doering; two grandchildren; his son-in-law, Gary
17 Doering; his brother, John Mark Smith; and two nieces and a
18 nephew; therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL
20 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
21 former Illinois State Representative and City of Springfield
22 Alderperson Irvin Frank "Irv" Smith and extend our sincere

1 condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved
2 him; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
4 presented to the family of Rep. Smith as an expression of our
5 deepest sympathy.