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SENATE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of former Illinois State Representative Barbara Flynn Currie, a distinguished public servant and former House Majority Leader, who passed away on April 16, 2026; and

WHEREAS, Rep. Currie was born in La Crosse, Wisconsin to Francis and Elsie Flynn and moved at a young age to the South Side of Chicago, where she developed a lifelong commitment to public service; and

WHEREAS, Rep. Currie pursued her education at the University of Chicago, earning both her bachelor's and master's degrees in political science, and proceeded to serve in civic and academic roles, including with the League of Women Voters of Chicago, DePaul University, and the National Opinion Research Center; and

WHEREAS, Rep. Currie served the people of Illinois with exceptional dedication for four decades in the Illinois House of Representatives from 1979 to 2019; and

WHEREAS, Rep. Currie made history as the first woman to
serve as Majority Leader of the Illinois House of

1 Representatives, holding that position for more than two
2 decades and helping shape the legislative direction of our
3 State; and

4 WHEREAS, Rep. Currie, throughout her tenure, was widely
5 respected for her intellect, integrity, and positive energy in
6 the legislative process, as well as for her commitment to
7 mentorship and public service; and

8 WHEREAS, Rep. Currie played a key role in advancing the
9 establishment of the Illinois Earned Income Tax Credit, a
10 policy that provides critical financial relief to low- and
11 moderate-income working families, encourages workforce
12 participation, and helps reduce poverty across the State; and

13 WHEREAS, Rep. Currie was instrumental in the repeal of the
14 death penalty in Illinois, reflecting a commitment to justice,
15 the prevention of wrongful convictions, and the recognition of
16 the moral and ethical concerns surrounding capital punishment;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, Rep. Currie contributed to the legalization of
19 marriage equality, ensuring that all individuals, regardless
20 of sexual orientation, are afforded equal rights and
21 protections under the law and strengthening the principles of
22 fairness and inclusion; and

1 WHEREAS, Rep. Currie supported measures prohibiting sexual
2 harassment in the workplace, helping to create safer, more
3 equitable work environments and reinforcing the fundamental
4 right of all individuals to dignity and respect on the job; and

5 WHEREAS, Rep. Currie advanced reforms to Illinois' school
6 funding system, promoting greater equity and adequacy in
7 education funding so that all students, regardless of their
8 community, have access to quality educational opportunities;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, Rep. Currie helped expand access to all-day
11 kindergarten, recognizing the importance of early childhood
12 education in improving long-term academic outcomes and
13 supporting working families; and

14 WHEREAS, Rep. Currie, in recognition of her distinguished
15 service, was awarded the Simon-Edgar Award in 2022 for her
16 forceful, creative, and consequential leadership in the
17 Illinois General Assembly, exemplifying statesmanship,
18 bipartisanship, and a steadfast ability to earn respect and
19 find common ground across party lines; and

20 WHEREAS, Rep. Currie was known for her civility, ability
21 to work across party lines, and unwavering belief in

1 responsive government; and

2 WHEREAS, Rep. Currie was married to celebrated American
3 legal scholar and Professor of Law at the University of
4 Chicago Law School, David Currie, for 47 years; and

5 WHEREAS, Rep. Currie served as head of the Illinois
6 Pollution Control Board upon her retirement from the Illinois
7 House of Representatives, a position her husband, David
8 Currie, also served in as the first ever chair of that board;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, Rep. Currie is survived by her children, Stephen
11 and Margaret, and by four grandchildren; and

12 WHEREAS, Rep. Currie's legacy endures through the
13 countless public officials she mentored and the generations of
14 Illinoisans who have benefited from her work; therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL
16 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing
17 and celebrate the life and commitment to public service of
18 former Illinois State Representative Barbara Flynn Currie; and
19 be it further

20 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be

1 presented to the family of Rep. Currie as an expression of our
2 deepest sympathy.