



HR0472

LRB101 12940 ALS 61776 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of  
3 Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of Julius W.  
4 Hegeler II of Danville, who passed away on July 5, 2019; and

5           WHEREAS, Julius Hegeler II was born in Danville to Madelle  
6 and Edward C. Hegeler II on May 9, 1928; he had two siblings,  
7 Edward and Madelle; he graduated from Danville High School in  
8 1946; after attending the University of Illinois and serving in  
9 the Army National Guard for three years, he earned a business  
10 degree from Millikin University in 1950; he then enlisted in  
11 the United States Air Force, where he was a decorated fighter  
12 pilot and flew 70 missions in the Korean War as a first  
13 lieutenant; he married Bobette Steely in 1956, and she preceded  
14 him in death; they had three children, Alix, Harlin, and  
15 Madelle; and

16           WHEREAS, Julius Hegeler II returned to Danville in 1955  
17 and, along with his brother Edward and partners Harry and  
18 Robert Peterson, built what would become Peterson-Puritan  
19 Inc., a chemical packaging company and one of Vermilion  
20 County's largest employers; the company was sold to Corn  
21 Products Co. in 1966, but he remained a vice president until  
22 his retirement in 1978; and

1           WHEREAS, Julius Hegeler II was the second person to serve  
2 as president of the Vermilion County Museum Board, a position  
3 he held from July 1967 until June 1970; during his time as  
4 president, he focused on developing youth programs and, along  
5 with others, agreed that the museum should be free to children  
6 to help develop their interest in history; he was president  
7 when the museum developed its accession policy; according to  
8 museum Director Sue Richter, "he helped put the museum on a  
9 solid footing"; and

10           WHEREAS, In 1992, Julius Hegeler II placed 90 percent of  
11 his fortune into the Julius W. Hegeler II Foundation, in part  
12 to restore the stately mansion where he grew up and turn it  
13 into a museum; and

14           WHEREAS, Julius Hegeler II was the first donor to the  
15 Danville Public School Foundation; his initial gift of \$1  
16 million in 2013 prompted the creation of the Public School  
17 Foundation's Julius W. Hegeler II Legacy Circle; in 2016, he  
18 bequeathed \$1 million to benefit generations of Danville  
19 schoolchildren for years to come; and

20           WHEREAS, Julius Hegeler II donated \$5 million in planned  
21 gifts to Danville Area Community College; in 2011, his  
22 foundation funded a new, state-of-the-art greenhouse; in 2013,  
23 he arranged for a planned gift of \$3 million to build the

1 10,000-square-foot Julius W. Hegeler II Advanced Technology  
2 Center, which was dedicated in 2014; in addition, he pledged to  
3 donate \$100,000 each year to fund the interest payment on the  
4 \$3 million bond issuance for the project; in 2016, the  
5 college's ornamental horticulture building was renamed for him  
6 after his foundation funded a renovation of the building's  
7 interior and design labs, as well as the grounds; in 2017,  
8 after the college acquired the old Carnegie Library from the  
9 Veterans Affairs, he bequeathed \$2 million for future  
10 renovations; and

11 WHEREAS, In 2016, Julius Hegeler II gave a \$3 million  
12 planned gift to WorkSource Enterprises, which provides  
13 services for those with disabilities, for a new vocational  
14 center; in 2017, he bequeathed \$3 million to the David S.  
15 Palmer Arena for new ice machinery and other improvements,  
16 including a new ice center entrance; he bequeathed \$3 million  
17 to Presence United Samaritans Medical Center to rename the  
18 cancer center after his wife, Bobette Steely Hegeler; he also  
19 funded improvements to the restrooms and the 60-year-old  
20 gymnasium at the Laura Lee Fellowship House, as well as the  
21 installation of a new scoreboard at Danville Stadium; and

22 WHEREAS, Julius Hegeler II was the title sponsor of  
23 Balloons Over Vermilion, now in its fourth year; recently, he  
24 provided funds to renovate the Fithian home and the Lamon

1 House, along with the Fischer Theater in downtown Danville; and

2 WHEREAS, Julius Hegeler II made it his mission to help his  
3 hometown, and his philanthropy was limitless; his generosity  
4 also benefited the Danville AMBUCS, the Vermilion County  
5 Conservation District, the Danville Family YMCA, Big Brothers  
6 Big Sisters of Danville, the Danville Area Community College  
7 Foundation, WorkSource Enterprises, the Danville Public  
8 Library Foundation, the United Way of Danville Area, the Laura  
9 Lee Fellowship House, the Vermilion County War Museum, and the  
10 Vermilion County Airport Authority; therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
12 HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
13 we mourn the passing of Julius W. Hegeler II and extend our  
14 sincere condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew  
15 and loved him; and be it further

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