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LRB102 20287 LAW 29139 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 Vernon
4 Eulion Jordan Jr. of Washington, D.C., who passed away on
5 March 1, 2021; and

6 WHEREAS, Vernon Jordan was born in Atlanta, Georgia to
7 Vernon Jordan Sr. and Mary Belle Jordan on August 15, 1935; he
8 graduated from an all-Black high school in Atlanta; he
9 enrolled at DePauw University in Indiana, where he took part
10 in college oratory contests; he graduated from Howard
11 University School of Law in 1960; he married Shirley
12 Yarbrough, and she preceded him in death in December 1985; he
13 married Ann Dibble Cook in November 1986; and

14 WHEREAS, Vernon Jordan became a law clerk to Donald Lee
15 Hollowell, a prominent Black lawyer who led a one-man civil
16 rights practice in Atlanta; during this time, he worked
17 closely on the case that desegregated the University of
18 Georgia; and

19 WHEREAS, Vernon Jordan became director of the Voter
20 Education Project of the Southern Regional Council and was
21 named executive director of the United Negro College Fund in
22 1970; a year later, he was recruited to be the head of the

1 National Urban League, which brought him to New York; during
2 his tenure, the group began issuing a widely read annual
3 report titled The State of Black America; he began pivoting
4 away from active leadership of the group to take on the roles
5 of lawyer and counselor for banks and corporations; and

6 WHEREAS, Vernon Jordan was recruited to join the Texas and
7 Washington-based law firm Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld by
8 Robert Strauss in 1982, where he served as a lawyer-lobbyist;
9 he was named co-chairman of the Clinton transition effort and
10 became a confidant of President Bill Clinton; he was recruited
11 to handle sensitive issues for the White House; he joined the
12 Wall Street investment firm Lazard while remaining associated
13 with Akin, Gump in 1999; and

14 WHEREAS, Vernon Jordan served on more than a dozen
15 corporate and nonprofit boards, including the Celanese
16 Corporation, Bankers Trust, American Express, and Xerox; he
17 co-wrote his memoir Vernon Can Read! with Annette Gordon-Reed,
18 which was published in 2001; he was the subject of an hour-long
19 PBS documentary, Vernon Jordan: Make It Plain in 2020; and

20 WHEREAS, Vernon Jordan was a man who saw it as his duty to
21 advance the next generation of African Americans in the United
22 States and used his decades of amassed influence to cultivate
23 the next generation of Black leaders in business, politics,

1 and the nonprofit world; his legacy will not be forgotten; and

2 WHEREAS, At the time of his death, Vernon Jordan was
3 survived by his wife, Ann Dibble Jordan; his daughter, Vickee
4 Jordan Adams; two grandsons; and three stepchildren;
5 therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
7 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
8 we mourn the passing of Vernon Eulion Jordan Jr. and extend our
9 sincere condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew
10 and loved him; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
12 presented to the family of Vernon Jordan as an expression of
13 our deepest sympathy.