



HR0473

LRB102 20376 MST 29234 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of Sam Polk of Peoria, who passed away on September 17, 2021; and

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WHEREAS, Sam Polk was born in Memphis, Tennessee to Charlie and Nellie Jane (Jones) Polk on March 6, 1935 and received his early education in the Memphis school system; he moved to the Peoria area in the 1940s and attended Greenley and, later, Woodruff High School; he was a Boy Scout at Carver Center, Troop 38; he was inducted into the U.S. Army on March 15, 1955 and honorably served his country, including time spent in the Army Reserve, until March 15, 1963; and

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WHEREAS, Sam Polk worked and was a supervisor for the Peoria Public Works Department for over 45 years, retiring in 2002; and

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WHEREAS, Sam Polk began serving the Peoria community through the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) local branch; as vice president, he advocated for equal employment opportunities for minorities, justice, voting rights, and overall basic human rights through peaceful boycotts, demonstrations, and organization; he volunteered and advocated for equality and had been a lifetime

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1 member of the NAACP since the 1950s; and

2 WHEREAS, Sam Polk was a former member of the Henry Brown
3 Lodge PHA and member of the Peoria Tri-County Urban League's
4 Guild; through the Tri-County Urban League, he supported the
5 city's youth and the Scientists, Technologists and Managers
6 (TSTM) program; he also supported the Carver Center and
7 participated on the committee to reopen the center after its
8 2011 closure, which resulted in its reopening in 2013; and

9 WHEREAS, In his retirement, Sam Polk mentored young men
10 and taught them work ethics, goal setting, financial
11 management through stipends, decision making, character
12 building, community involvement, and skill development through
13 apprenticeship opportunities; he enjoyed being a behind the
14 scenes supporter of worthy causes, people, and organizations;
15 he was always willing to give a hand to those willing to take a
16 step; he contributed to many notable organizations, including
17 the Heritage Ensemble, St. Martin De Porres Boy Scout Troop,
18 local food pantries, Girl Scouts, St. Jude, Susan B. Komen,
19 and The Whitney M. Young Jr. annual events; and

20 WHEREAS, Sam Polk had an amazing sense of humor; he loved
21 jazz music, especially albums by Myles Davis; if there were
22 any last words he would want to say, it would have been "GO
23 VOTE"; and

1 WHEREAS, Sam Polk was preceded in death by his parents;
2 his daughter, Sheryl Gulley; his brother, James Polk; his
3 grandson, Jonathan; and his nephew, Kevin Polk; and

4 WHEREAS, Sam Polk is survived by his wife of 47 years, Jean
5 A. Polk; his children, Kenneth Sam Polk Sr. and Celeste
6 (Donald) Polk-Coverdell; his grandchildren, Darnell, Kenneth
7 Jr. (Tyeisha), Kevin Sr. (Jazmyn), Caleb, and Donavan; his
8 great-grandchildren, Skylar, Kailani, Kassadi, Kevin Jr.,
9 Kennedy, and Kaydence; his nieces, Jonelle (Daniel) McCloud,
10 Rebecca Polk, and Karen (Billy) Raymond; and numerous other
11 relatives and many friends; therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
13 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
14 we mourn the passing of Sam Polk and extend our sincere
15 condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved
16 him; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
18 presented to the family of Sam Polk as an expression of our
19 deepest sympathy.