



HR0631

LRB102 26001 LAW 35409 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 Thelma
4 Yolonde Byassee Peterson, who passed away on December 28,
5 2021; and

6 WHEREAS, Yolonde Byassee Peterson was born to Sarah
7 Elizabeth Vaughn Byassee and James Henry Byassee of Creal
8 Spring on July 28, 1928; she attended school through 8th grade
9 in Creal Springs before transferring to Marion Township High
10 School, which offered a music curriculum; she married Guy H.
11 "Pete" Peterson on August 8, 1951, and he preceded her in death
12 in October 2021; she attended Southern Illinois University
13 Carbondale, where she earned her Bachelor of Music Education
14 in 1957 and her Master of Science in Education in June 1970;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, Yolonde Byassee Peterson began her career in
17 education early in life, teaching piano lessons at age 12; she
18 taught at Marion Community Unit School District 2 for nearly
19 40 years; she produced classic Broadway musicals at Marion
20 High School from 1964 until she retired in 1989; and

21 WHEREAS, Yolonde Byassee Peterson belonged to a number of
22 civic groups and charitable causes; she was the musical

1 director of First United Methodist Church in Marion for over
2 50 years; she served as chair of the Marion Cultural and Civic
3 Center Board for 48 years, shaping the cultural landscape of
4 Marion and Southern Illinois; she was a longtime member of
5 Marion First Baptist Church; and

6 WHEREAS, Yolonde Byassee Peterson received a number of
7 accolades for her dedication to the community and the arts,
8 including the Woman of Achievement Award in 1979, the Mayor's
9 Service Award in 2002, and the Award of Excellence for Service
10 to the Performing Arts in 2004 by the Greater Marion Area
11 Chamber of Commerce; she was honored by the Marion Cultural
12 and Civic Center Auditorium with the naming of The Yolonde B.
13 Peterson Performance Hall in 2018; and

14 WHEREAS, Yolonde Byassee Peterson was a Southern Illinois
15 cultural, musical, and artistic icon; she will be fondly
16 remembered as Marion's "Matriarch of the Arts", whose
17 unflappable presence in the community was a force that moved
18 the arts forward; her legacy lives on through her many former
19 students becoming music educators and performers around the
20 globe; and

21 WHEREAS, Yolonde Byassee Peterson was preceded in death by
22 her husband of 70 years, Guy H. "Pete" Peterson; her parents;
23 her two siblings, Rosella Byassee (Taylor) and James Howard

1 Byassee; and her niece, Barbara Jane Taylor Cox; and

2 WHEREAS, Yolonde Byassee Peterson is survived by her
3 nephews, James (Linda Pinson Byassee) Byassee and Don Byassee;
4 her great-nieces and nephews, Elizabeth (Jeff) Byassee Shore,
5 Amanda Yolonde (Ashley) Byassee Gott, Margaret (Shawn) Byassee
6 Edmondson, Evan James (Amanda) Byassee, and Kevin (Mary) Cox;
7 her nieces, Kara Cox Santi and Cammy (Mark) Cox Duggins; her
8 great-great-nieces and nephews, Benjamin Shore, Victoria
9 Shore, Jamie Gott, Alex Gott, Jeremy Gott, Henry Edmondson,
10 Evangeline Edmondson, Rylee Byassee, Jason Ross, Max (Natacha)
11 Duggins, Samuel Duggins, and Nico Santi; her great-great-great
12 nephew, Silas Duggins; and her many friends; therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
14 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
15 we mourn the passing of Thelma Yolonde Byassee Peterson and
16 extend our sincere condolences to her family, friends, and all
17 who knew and loved her; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
19 presented to the family of Yolonde Byassee Peterson as an
20 expression of our deepest sympathy.