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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of Mary Ella Works Freiburg, Ph.D., who passed away on February 10, 2021; and

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WHEREAS, Dr. Freiburg was born in Humboldt, Kansas to Clark and Leota Works on December 5, 1926; she earned her Bachelor of Science in Biology and Chemistry from the College of Emporia in Kansas in 1948; she obtained her Master of Science in Zoology from the University of Kansas in 1950, where she was the only female in her biology class; she married Richard Freiburg in Humboldt on November 20, 1950; she completed her Ph.D. at the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1971; and

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WHEREAS, Dr. Freiburg was a scientist, educator, professor emerita, and former chair of the Biology Department at MacMurray College in Jacksonville; she started her career at MacMurray College teaching part-time in 1957 while caring for four children and working on her Ph.D.; she taught anatomy and physiology, introductory biology, and many other courses; she was known by scores of elementary education teachers for her "kiddie bio" class, where she taught them how to impart a love for biology to young learners; she loved teaching and took great pride in the accomplishments of her students, many of

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1 whom became doctors, vets, dentists, nurses, and science
2 teachers; she and her husband, a fellow professor, were
3 lovingly referred to by students as "Ma & Pa Freiburg"; she
4 served MacMurray College with distinction for 34 years,
5 retiring as professor emerita of biology in 1991; and

6 WHEREAS, Alongside her husband, she enjoyed attending
7 homecoming events at MacMurray College to reconnect with
8 former students and faculty and traveling; together, they took
9 25 trips overseas for summer research projects and pleasure,
10 with destinations including London, the Netherlands, the
11 Galapagos Islands, Australia, Kenya, and Scotland; and

12 WHEREAS, Dr. Freiburg had a number of interests; she loved
13 working with gourds and used them to make beautiful artwork,
14 and she attended meetings and classes throughout the Midwest
15 held by the Illinois Gourd Society; most recently, she enjoyed
16 reading books about almost any topic, keeping up with what
17 everyone in the family was doing, and talking about movies,
18 politics, gourds, her childhood in Kansas, books, and many
19 other topics; and

20 WHEREAS, Dr. Freiburg was known as a resilient,
21 independent person; she knew how to make others feel
22 appreciated and taught with style and passion, wearing pearls
23 while conducting dissections; she was an inspiration and will

1 be sorely missed; and

2 WHEREAS, Dr. Freiburg was preceded in death by her husband
3 of over 68 years, Richard Freiburg, and her three brothers,
4 Bruce Works (Marcia), Paul Works (Barbara), and Clark Works
5 Jr.; and

6 WHEREAS, Dr. Freiburg is survived by children, Ann (Gil)
7 Opferman, Stuart (Emie) Freiburg, Jeanne Freiburg (Matt
8 Bogenschultz), and Jane (Jim) Nickerson; her grandchildren,
9 Sara Artega, Nathaniel Opferman, Eli Freiburg, Emily Opferman,
10 Mary Ellen Nickerson, Molly Nickerson, Will Bogenschultz, Mary
11 Freiburg, and Laura Freiburg; and her great-grandchildren,
12 Alex and Isabella Artega; therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL
14 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
15 Mary Ella Works Freiburg, Ph.D., and extend our sincere
16 condolences to her family, friends, and all who knew and loved
17 her; and be it further

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