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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 Janet Denise Kelly, who passed away on April 11, 2021; and

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WHEREAS, Janet Kelly was born in Chicago to Rev. Robert and Marie Kelly on October 3, 1955; she committed to her faith at an early age and later joined Cathedral Missionary Baptist Church; she grew up singing the gospel in the church choir and alongside her gifted sisters, known as The Kelly Sisters; she attended John Farren Elementary School and Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable Upper Grade Center; in 1973, she graduated from Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable High School, where she was active in numerous clubs and especially enjoyed playing the clarinet in the band and being a member of the cheerleading and pom-pom squads; and

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WHEREAS, Janet Kelly received her Bachelor of Science in Child and Family Services in 1979 from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, where she became a member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. in 1974; she received her Master of Social Work from Chicago State University in 2006; and

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WHEREAS, Janet Kelly was instrumental in choreographing some of Sigma's most memorable on-campus performances at SIU

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1 from 1975 to 1978; she and four college friends entered Kappa
2 Karnival's annual talent show and called themselves Sax Fifth
3 Avenue; upon returning home to Chicago, she continued singing
4 and established a group known as The Goddesses, which
5 performed at local venues across the city; and

6 WHEREAS, Janet Kelly loved working with children,
7 especially as the morning and after-school coordinator; her
8 positions included ABJ Community Services (Licensing and
9 Permanency Specialist, Case Manager), Metropolitan Family
10 Services (Resource/Program Coordinator, Practitioner), and
11 Catholic Charities & Heartland Human Services (Case Manager);
12 she mentored, produced, and directed many musicals and plays
13 to raise funds for several agencies over the years; she
14 especially enjoyed producing the adaptation of The Wiz; she
15 retired from the social services field in 2019; and

16 WHEREAS, Janet Kelly spread the gospel across the airwaves
17 on WVON radio station every Sunday at 7 p.m. for 25 years with
18 the Mother Meatchem Radio Choir; she sang background vocals
19 for recording artists and was a trained pianist and played the
20 clarinet; and

21 WHEREAS, Janet Kelly's hobbies included playing tennis,
22 interior decorating, and making jewelry; she worked part time
23 for Park Lane Jewelry and was an avid collector of art; for

1 several years she was an art consultant for Artistic
2 Impressions; her ultimate hobby was shopping, and QVC and HSN
3 were two of her favorite channels; and

4 WHEREAS, Janet Kelly thoughtfulness held no bounds when it
5 came to family; if a family member was in need, she would
6 forsake her wants to make sure that their needs were met; and

7 WHEREAS, Janet Kelly was preceded in death by her parents
8 and her sister, Renee Kelly; and

9 WHEREAS, Janet Kelly is survived by her daughter, Janea
10 Smith; her grandson, Jamari White; her sisters, Diane
11 (Lawrence) Kent and Rev. Debra Kelly; her brother, Bernard
12 Kelly; her half-brother, Ricky (Barbara) Kelly; her
13 half-sister, Linda Kelly; her cousin, Bill (Dee Dee) Driver;
14 her nephews, Juan Gordon, Corey Criss Sr. (Tammy), Doniel
15 Kelly (godson), and Darren Kelly; her nieces, Keena (Norris)
16 Robinson and Robin Thacker; her great-nieces and nephews; her
17 best friend, Sandra R. Kelly; her special friend, Arnold
18 "Ernie" McBlackwell; her close friend, Gloria Styles; and
19 numerous friends that she loved dearly; therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL
21 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
22 Janet Denise Kelly and extend our sincere condolences to her

1 family, friends, and all who knew and loved her; and be it
2 further

3 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
4 presented to the family of Janet Kelly as an expression of our
5 deepest sympathy.