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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 Janice Marie Mitchell, who passed away on November 15, 2021; and

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WHEREAS, Janice Mitchell was born to Ola Mae Babers and LuArthur Washington in Natchitoches, Louisiana on February 1, 1963; she attended Weaver Elementary School, Natchitoches Junior High School, and Natchitoches Central High School; growing up, she was a member of the Second Baptist Church, Junior Usher Board, 4-H Club, Junior ROTC, and later ROTC; she served as Commander of the 378th Chemical Company of the U.S. Army Reserves Unit; she attended Southern University and A & M College in Baton Rouge, Louisiana where she obtained a bachelor's degree in Social Work in 1986; she then graduated from The University of Chicago with a master's degree in Social Work in 1988; she married Daniel "Danny" Mitchell in Natchitoches on May 27, 1989; and

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WHEREAS, After moving to Urbana, Janice Mitchell worked for various youth-serving organizations, including the Cunningham Children's Home, the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, the Regional Office of Education, and Urbana School District 116; in 2010, she became founder and CEO of Urbana Neighborhood Connections Center,

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1 Inc. (UNCC), which is a year-round community center that  
2 serves between 50 and 100 Pre-K to 12th grade students during  
3 after-school and summer programming hours; during the COVID-19  
4 pandemic, UNCC's doors remained open all day to provide a  
5 space for students to engage in virtual learning in a  
6 supervised, supportive environment; she also started a cake  
7 decorating business called "Mitchell's Sweet Creations"; and

8 WHEREAS, Janice Mitchell served as a parent volunteer in  
9 the local schools and created programs to teach underserved  
10 youth about their rich heritage as well as provide academic  
11 and social-emotional enrichment; she founded "Prairie Tracks",  
12 "Brothas & Sistas" and "Sankofa Summer Exposures" programs for  
13 students at Prairie (Dr. Williams) Elementary and Urbana  
14 Middle School; she took students on trips to museums, theme  
15 parks, and college campuses all over the United States and  
16 Canada; she facilitated the provision of scholarships and  
17 laptops to several groups of graduating high school seniors in  
18 Champaign County; she decorated multiple venues for various  
19 occasions and worked alongside Urbana High School staff to  
20 assist pregnant teen girls in attaining their diplomas; she  
21 started the Urbana High School Equity & Social Justice Club,  
22 founded the College & Career Readiness Program as an extension  
23 of the center, and started the first youth praise dance  
24 ministry at Jericho Missionary Baptist Church; and

1           WHEREAS, Janice Mitchell was an active member of the  
2 Champaign County Housing Authority Board for 10 years; she  
3 attended Jericho Missionary Baptist Church where she served as  
4 usher board president and in countless other roles for over 25  
5 years; in 2019, she was a founding member of the Greater  
6 Philadelphia Baptist Church in Urbana where she served in the  
7 usher ministry and as church clerk; and

8           WHEREAS, Janice Mitchell enjoyed sewing, cooking,  
9 traveling back home to Louisiana to spend time with her  
10 family, shopping in nearby major cities, and spending time  
11 with close friends; she was well known for her loving nature  
12 and unwavering service to her community, her faith, and her  
13 nation; she will be most remembered for her spirit of  
14 excellence, her passion for education, and her legacy of love;  
15 and

16           WHEREAS, Janice Mitchell was preceded in death by her  
17 parents and her sibling, Mary Lee; and

18           WHEREAS, Janice Mitchell is survived by her husband of 32  
19 years, Danny; her children, Jeniece and Everette Mitchell; her  
20 siblings, Ida, Susie, Gerlean, John, Shawn, and Glenda; her 28  
21 nieces, nephews, great-nieces, and great-nephews; and her  
22 godchildren, Lentroy Anderson, Tina Findley, Rakeem Sallee,  
23 Donald "Ducky" Stewart, Celina White, and most recently baby

1     Erique "EJ" Wright; therefore, be it

2             RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL  
3     ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
4     Janice Marie Mitchell and extend our sincere condolences to  
5     her family, friends, and all who knew and loved her; and be it  
6     further

7             RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
8     presented to the family of Janice Mitchell as an expression of  
9     our deepest sympathy.