SENATE RESOLUTION

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

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

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

WHEREAS, Janice Mitchell served as a parent volunteer in the local schools and created programs to teach underserved youth about their rich heritage as well as provide academic and social-emotional enrichment; she founded "Prairie Tracks", "Brothas & Sistas" and "Sankofa Summer Exposures" programs for students at Prairie (Dr. Williams) Elementary and Urbana Middle School; she took students on trips to museums, theme parks, and college campuses all over the United States and Canada; she facilitated the provision of scholarships and laptops to several groups of graduating high school seniors in Champaign County; she decorated multiple venues for various occasions and worked alongside Urbana High School staff to assist pregnant teen girls in attaining their diplomas; she started the Urbana High School Equity & Social Justice Club, founded the College & Career Readiness Program as an extension of the center, and started the first youth praise dance ministry at Jericho Missionary Baptist Church; and
WHEREAS, Janice Mitchell was an active member of the Champaign County Housing Authority Board for 10 years; she attended Jericho Missionary Baptist Church where she served as usher board president and in countless other roles for over 25 years; in 2019, she was a founding member of the Greater Philadelphia Baptist Church in Urbana where she served in the usher ministry and as church clerk; and

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

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

WHEREAS, Janice Mitchell is survived by her husband of 32 years, Danny; her children, Jeniece and Everette Mitchell; her siblings, Ida, Susie, Gerlean, John, Shawn, and Glenda; her 28 nieces, nephews, great-nieces, and great-nephews; and her godchildren, Lentroy Anderson, Tina Findley, Rakeem Sallee, Donald "Ducky" Stewart, Celina White, and most recently baby
ERIQUE "EJ" WRIGHT; therefore, be it

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

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