



HR0550

LRB103 37049 LAW 67165 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 Edward
4 M. "Ed" Smith, who passed away on January 3, 2024; and

5 WHEREAS, Ed Smith was born to Connell F. Smith and Mary
6 Jewel Smith in Cairo on September 9, 1954; he received his
7 Associate of Arts from Shawnee College in 1974; he earned his
8 bachelor's degree from the National Labor College; he later
9 graduated from the Harvard University Trade Union Program; and

10 WHEREAS, Ed Smith was a champion of the American Labor
11 Movement, from his earliest days at the Laborers'
12 International Union of North America (LiUNA) through his
13 tenure as chairman and CEO of Ullico Inc., a labor-owned
14 financial services firm, leaving every place he worked better
15 than he found it; and

16 WHEREAS, Ed Smith joined LiUNA at age 13 in 1968, working
17 as a laborer before being elected as business manager of
18 Laborers' Local Union 773 at age 21 in 1976; focusing his
19 efforts on using innovative strategies to protect labor
20 rights, he led 40 organizing drives with groups across
21 Southern Illinois during the 1970s and 80s, which boosted
22 Local 773's membership from 300 to 4,000; he was named

1 business manager of Southern Illinois Laborers' District
2 Council in 1985, later becoming chairman of the Central
3 Laborers' Pension Fund; he was appointed regional manager of
4 the Midwest Region in 1994, serving over 58,000 members; he
5 was elected as vice president and regional manager of LiUNA,
6 and he also served as assistant to the general president;
7 during his tenure, he helped forge the National Alliance for
8 Fair Contracting, pioneered regional Tri-Funds programs for
9 contractor cooperation and worker protection, and greatly
10 expanded LiUNA's political influence throughout the Midwest
11 Region, lobbying at statehouses and urging members to run for
12 local office; and

13 WHEREAS, Ed Smith joined Ullico in 2007, assembling an
14 experienced management team and working hard to redouble the
15 company's commitment to the labor movement while serving as
16 executive vice president from January 2007 until May 2008; he
17 then served as president from May 2008 until he was named CEO
18 of Ullico in January 2011; under his leadership, Ullico
19 enhanced its insurance program for union leaders and benefit
20 plan trustees, grew its union-supporting commercial real
21 estate financing fund, and generously gave back to the
22 community, donating millions of dollars each year to
23 philanthropic causes; internally, he was insistent that the
24 company take care of its employees, building a culture that
25 put people first; through his bold leadership and visionary

1 business mind, he was integral in moving Ullico forward; and

2 WHEREAS, Ed Smith served on the Democratic National
3 Committee and was a delegate to many national conventions; he
4 formerly served as chairman of the Illinois State Board of
5 Investment, as chairman of the National Alliance for Fair
6 Contracting, and as a member of the Illinois Department of
7 Labor Advisory Board; he was a board member of the National
8 Coordinating Committee for Multiemployer Plans (NCCMP), the
9 Laborers' Charitable Foundation, The Laborers' CARE (TLC), and
10 America's Agenda: Healthcare for All, and he served as a
11 trustee for the AFL-CIO Staff Retirement Plan; and

12 WHEREAS, Ed Smith was a key benefactor to the Therapy
13 Center in Carterville, the Shawnee College Foundation in
14 Ullin, and the Connell F. Smith Homer Brown Scholarship Fund
15 in Marion; and

16 WHEREAS, Ed Smith never knew a stranger, making friends
17 wherever he went and always treating others with dignity, and
18 he was known for his generous spirit, moral conviction, fierce
19 loyalty, and infectious optimism; and

20 WHEREAS, Ed Smith was the husband of Betty, his closest
21 advisor, the father of Jordan and Matt, a grandfather, and a
22 friend; and

1 WHEREAS, Ed Smith will be remembered for the profound
2 impact he made on the labor movement, Ullico and its
3 employees, and those around him; therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
5 HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
6 we mourn the passing of Edward M. "Ed" Smith and extend our
7 sincere condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew
8 and loved him; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
10 presented to the family of Ed Smith as an expression of our
11 deepest sympathy.