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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 Byron DeHaan, who passed away on May 8, 2023; and

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WHEREAS, Byron DeHaan was born to Sophia and Conrad DeHaan in LaGrange on July 18, 1926; he served in the U.S. Navy from 1944 to 1946 and from 1950 to 1951, retiring as operations officer and temporary executive officer of U.S.S. PCEC 873, with the rank of lieutenant junior grade; he married Sylvia Williams Hogan in 1963; he earned his Bachelor of Science in Industrial Management from the University of Kansas, where he was named a member of honorary fraternity Omicron Delta Kappa; and

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WHEREAS, Byron DeHaan worked at Caterpillar from 1948 to 1991, last serving as its director of public affairs; he founded the company's historical archives and authored Caterpillar's first book length history, 50 Years on Tracks, in 1954 and its first Code of Worldwide Business Conduct in 1974; at his retirement, he was honored by the Illinois House of Representatives when they adopted a resolution commending him on his contributions to his community and State; and

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WHEREAS, Byron DeHaan was a leader in the successful 1952

1 Peoria referendum to adopt the council-management of  
2 government; he was an early advocate for the community college  
3 concept for the Peoria area; he co-chaired the speaker's  
4 bureau, leading to the successful 1966 referendum that  
5 established Illinois Central College; and

6 WHEREAS, Byron DeHaan was involved in civil rights  
7 matters, serving as vice-chair of the Peoria Commission on  
8 Human Relations in the mid-1960s; he was appointed as chairman  
9 of the Illinois Commission on Human Rights, then the State's  
10 principal civil rights agency, by Governor Otto Kerner in  
11 1967; he was named to a second two-year term by Governor  
12 Richard Ogilvie in 1969; and

13 WHEREAS, Byron DeHaan earned over 200 semester credit  
14 hours at Bradley University and Illinois Central College from  
15 1991 to 2008; he acquired skills in ceramics and oil painting;  
16 he was named an honorary alumnus of Bradley University in  
17 2000; he won poetry competitions at both schools; in 2004, he  
18 had a collection of 32 of his poems published by Converse  
19 Marketing, Inc. under the title Breviary, which was a finalist  
20 in the 2005 Pulitzer competition; and

21 WHEREAS, Byron DeHaan sang in Peoria's Orpheus Club in the  
22 early 1950s and in the Bradley Community Chorus from 1991 to  
23 2008; accompanying himself on guitar, he sang German carols at

1 Pettengill-Morrison House Christmas Candlelight events for 20  
2 years; he was an occasional performer at local retirement and  
3 nursing homes; he co-chaired the founding board of the Peoria  
4 Civic Opera Company in 1977; he was named an honorary member of  
5 music fraternity Phi Mu Alpha by Bradley University in 1998;  
6 and

7 WHEREAS, Byron DeHaan was a founding member of the Pillars  
8 Society of the Heart of Illinois United Way; he was a former  
9 president of the Peoria Toastmasters Club; he served on the  
10 boards of Goodwill Industries, the Peoria and Illinois  
11 chambers of commerce, the Hult Health Education Center, the  
12 Peoria Historical Society, and the Lakeview Museum; in 2000,  
13 he became co-chair of the Museum Collaboration Group and held  
14 a leadership role in conceiving and locating the Peoria  
15 Riverfront Museum; and

16 WHEREAS, Byron DeHaan was commissioned to commemorate the  
17 Peoria Civic Center's new Preston Jackson sculpture about the  
18 Underground Railroad in Peoria in 2008; his resulting poem,  
19 Hallowed Ground, appears on the wall of the Jefferson Street  
20 entrance; and

21 WHEREAS, Byron DeHaan was honored as one of six  
22 Peoria-area "legends" by Central Illinois Business  
23 Publications in July 2016; he was a long-term Rotarian and a

1 Paul Harris Fellow; he was a long-standing member of the  
2 Governing Board of the Forest Park Foundation; and

3 WHEREAS, Byron DeHaan was a golf enthusiast and won the  
4 Caterpillar A Flight tournament in 1960; he was a member of the  
5 Peoria Country Club for over 50 years; and

6 WHEREAS, Byron DeHaan was preceded in death by his wife,  
7 Sylvia; his parents; and his sister, Marilyn Orloff; and

8 WHEREAS, Byron DeHaan is survived by his sons, William  
9 (Suzanne) DeHaan and Robert (Cheryl) DeHaan; his daughters,  
10 Dr. Kathleen DeHaan and Nancy DeHaan; his grandchildren, Lisa,  
11 Peter, Anna, Tessa, Robert, Henry, and Sylvia; and six  
12 great-grandchildren; therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL  
14 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
15 Byron DeHaan and extend our sincere condolences to his family,  
16 friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
18 presented to the family of Byron DeHaan as an expression of our  
19 deepest sympathy.