



SR0439

LRB103 33849 LAW 63664 r

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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 Bishop Eddie Lee Hightower, who passed away on August 8, 2023; and

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WHEREAS, Bishop Hightower was born in Gobler, Missouri on August 1, 1956; he was raised in Alton, Illinois; he received his bachelor's degree in business administration from Eureka College; he spent time in Chicago and California, before settling in Fayetteville, North Carolina; he participated in several professional development programs; he was presented with an honorary doctorate from Jacksonville Baptist Theological Seminary; and

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WHEREAS, Bishop Hightower was a visionary and strategic leader who seamlessly translated business strategies into tangible successes; with an impeccable understanding of policy and procedures within the mental health industry, he founded Advance Behavioral Center, Inc. in 2008, where his leadership ensured compliance, quality, and ethical practices; and

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WHEREAS, Bishop Hightower was devoted to his faith, becoming a minister in September 1991; he was ordained under the guidance of Rev. John McKoy of Spring Lake Missionary Baptist (MB) Church; he served as a deacon before becoming the

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1 esteemed pastor of New Salem International Ministries,
2 spearheading its growth and transformation into a
3 multimillion-dollar operation; from the inception of New Salem
4 MB Church, he nurtured it with care through successes and
5 challenges, adopting a five-fold plan of worship, study,
6 prayer, fasting, and community engagement; his ministry also
7 extended to helping the marginalized through offering
8 transitional housing for the homeless and a visionary
9 immigration program; and

10 WHEREAS, Bishop Hightower served as the first presiding
11 bishop of the International Kingdom Covenant Churches and the
12 presiding bishop of the Trimm Global Network of Churches; he
13 was a lifetime member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc; and

14 WHEREAS, Bishop Hightower was a doting husband and father,
15 and he shared with family his passion for coaching basketball,
16 western TV shows, and Doberman Pinschers; his role extended
17 beyond his immediate family, embracing the congregation he
18 led; and

19 WHEREAS, Bishop Hightower was a mental health advocate,
20 entrepreneur, and community leader; his legacy extends through
21 the lives he touched, the values he instilled, and the faith he
22 lived; and

1 WHEREAS, Bishop Hightower was preceded in death by his
2 parents, Edward Hightower and Daisie Hightower Robinson; his
3 stepfather, Tom Robinson; his stepfather-in-law, Chauncey
4 Gilbert Jr.; and his father-in-law, Edward Ford; and

5 WHEREAS, Bishop Hightower was the husband of Lady April
6 Dawn Hightower; the father of Tiffany Hightower, Eric
7 Hightower, Emily Wright, James Wright IV, John Michael Wright,
8 and Ebony Dawn Hightower; the brother of Josephine Scruggs,
9 Edward (Barbara) Hightower, Calvin (Barbara) Hightower,
10 Clarence (Beverly) Hightower, Robert Hightower, Andy
11 (Charlotte) Hightower, and Joanne (Bobby) Hightower-Thomas;
12 the son-in-law of Caroline Gilbert; the in-law of Chauncey
13 (Michelle) Gilbert, Kim (Philander) Gilbert-Hughes, Kevin
14 (Charlece) Gilbert, Keith (Felicia) Gilbert, Denice (Phillip)
15 Sartor, and Evangelone (DaRon) Rackley; the grandfather of
16 Eric Hightower Jr., Emira Hightower, Kalynn Hightower, Cameron
17 Henry Williams, and Emani Hightower; and the uncle and cousin
18 of many; therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL
20 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
21 Bishop Eddie Lee Hightower and extend our sincere condolences
22 to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be
23 it further

1 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
2 presented to the family of Bishop Hightower as an expression
3 of our deepest sympathy.