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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The 7th Senate District is one of the most ethnically diverse districts in the State of Illinois; and

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WHEREAS, The district has long been and increasingly is home to Black people from every corner of the vast and beautiful Black diaspora; and

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WHEREAS, The Black and African American communities of the district have a rich history of achievements, culture, activism, and countless other contributions to the vibrancy and uniqueness of the district; and

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WHEREAS, Graceland Cemetery, located in the district in Lakeview, is the permanent resting place for 29 leaders of the Underground Railroad network that helped many thousands of enslaved African American people find freedom; and

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WHEREAS, Uptown was one of the first places African Americans could live on the north side outside the Black Belt, despite experiencing intense racism and discrimination once they moved there; and

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WHEREAS, Black elders currently residing in the 7th District as longtime residents were some of the first Black

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1 people decades ago to move into communities such as Buena  
2 Park, Rogers Park, Lincoln Square, Andersonville, Budlong  
3 Woods, Uptown, Edgewater, Lakeview, West Ridge, and other  
4 areas of the district; and

5 WHEREAS, Black elders have left a rich legacy in the  
6 district by creating safe spaces and being role models for  
7 youth of all races and ethnicities; and

8 WHEREAS, The Black Panther Party established a legacy of  
9 mutual aid and humanity across racial lines, which continues  
10 to shape the community-led mutual aid efforts in Uptown, on  
11 Argyle Street, in Rogers Park, along the Winthrop and Kenmore  
12 corridors, and in other 7th District areas; and

13 WHEREAS, The 7th District is home to the historic Winthrop  
14 Family Garden, which honors the legacy of African American  
15 families who made the historic move during the Great Migration  
16 and began building a Black residential community along the  
17 4600 North block of Winthrop Avenue as early as the year 1910;  
18 and

19 WHEREAS, Winthrop Avenue was the only block on which Black  
20 families could live because of segregation, with scores of  
21 racial covenants hindering them from moving onto other blocks  
22 in Uptown; with only 18 families living on 4600 North Winthrop

1 Avenue, they formed a community that supported each other and  
2 became one family despite the restrictive covenants intended  
3 to keep Uptown segregated; the Winthrop Family Garden stands  
4 as a place of remembrance and celebrates what it took to make  
5 Uptown what it is today; and

6 WHEREAS, Many Black residents, including whole villages  
7 and communities, have been displaced from the far north side  
8 over the decades, including from parts of neighborhoods within  
9 the 7th District; and

10 WHEREAS, Those same Black residents left their mark on  
11 nearly every neighborhood in the north lake front district;  
12 and

13 WHEREAS, The future of the 7th District is as bright as the  
14 past, as Black people continue to run small businesses of  
15 every type, continue to graduate from schools, and assume  
16 leadership roles in their communities, in the region, and in  
17 our state in every imaginable way; and

18 WHEREAS, Uptown features small businesses from West and  
19 Central Africa, such as Osas African Kitchen, the Nigerian  
20 Kitchen Restaurant, the Mukase African Restaurant, the Makola  
21 African Supermarket, Amen African Braiding, the Iyanze Bar &  
22 Cafe, The Good Shepherd Enterprise, B&Q Afro Root Cuisine, the

1 Queen African Hair Braiding Salon, and Chem's African Hair  
2 Braiding, among others; and

3 WHEREAS, Edgewater, Uptown, and Rogers Park are home to an  
4 extensive Eritrean and Ethiopian population spread along  
5 Broadway and Clark Street with family-run businesses such as  
6 the Axum Ethiopian Restaurant, the Ethiopian Diamond, the  
7 Awash Ethiopian Restaurant, Tesfa Ethiopian Cuisine, the Selam  
8 Ethiopian Kitchen, Queen Sheba, the Ethio Mart, the Mella  
9 Cafe, the Demera Restaurant, the Kukulu Market, the Ethio  
10 Mart, the Denden Restaurant, and Meron Injera; and

11 WHEREAS, Howard Avenue in Rogers Park is home to many  
12 Black-owned Caribbean small businesses, such as the Kizin  
13 Creole Restaurant, Caribbean Cuts, the Good To Go Restaurant,  
14 the Caribbean American Baking Co., and Ashley Beauty Supply;  
15 and

16 WHEREAS, The 7th District is home to many Black Americans  
17 and African Americans and is comprised of a glorious multitude  
18 of ethnic groups from all over Africa, including those from  
19 Ghana, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Senegal, Mali,  
20 Togo, Congo, Cameroon, Sudan, the Caribbean, and South  
21 America, many of whom found refuge along Broadway and Sheridan  
22 in Uptown and along Howard Avenue in Rogers Park and built a  
23 community; and

1           WHEREAS, The Bryn Mawr Historic District in Edgewater is  
2 home to a growing number of new African American and Black and  
3 LGBTQ+-owned small businesses that bring vibrancy to this  
4 historic corridor; and

5           WHEREAS, Ebony DeBerry, a Black woman and lifelong  
6 resident of Rogers Park, wanted to build a community of people  
7 who lifted each other and gave back to the community she had  
8 growing up; she helped develop ONE Northside, which is a mixed  
9 income, multi-ethnic, intergenerational community-based  
10 organization that brings together the diverse communities of  
11 Chicago's far north side and uses collective power to address  
12 injustice and advance the community's interests; she has  
13 created safe spaces for women of color to come together, share  
14 resources, and encourage each other; and

15           WHEREAS, Jackie Taylor, a Black woman and longtime  
16 resident of Uptown, founded the Black Ensemble Theater in  
17 1976, which is the first cultural center in the nation  
18 dedicated to eradicating racism through the arts; the Black  
19 Ensemble Theater is a crown jewel of the 7th District,  
20 bringing together not only Black residents but people from all  
21 racial and ethnic backgrounds to celebrate through free  
22 outdoor concerts for the community on the 4400 block of North  
23 Clark Street, unique plays, and other programming that

1 celebrates the arts in the district; and

2 WHEREAS, Dr. Ana Vicky Castillo, an advocate for the  
3 education of the Latin and African diaspora, created the Afro  
4 Latino Historical Society and the African Diaspora Museum; she  
5 has worked tirelessly to reclaim the legacy of the forgotten  
6 history of the African American and Latin community; she has  
7 helped inform the public of the great achievements of the  
8 Afro-Latino and African immigrant communities; therefore, be  
9 it

10 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL  
11 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we recognize the Black  
12 and African American communities of the 7th Senate District  
13 and express our deep appreciation and respect for the myriad  
14 of Black communities that currently reside in and have lived  
15 in the 7th District; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That we celebrate the history, achievements,  
17 culture, activism, and countless other contributions that  
18 Black people from a vast and beautiful diaspora have made to  
19 the 7th Senate District of Illinois on the far north side of  
20 Chicago.