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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Senator Ed Petka has served the people of the 42nd Senate District with honor and distinction for 14 years, from 1993 through 2006; and he served as a member of the Illinois House of Representatives from 1987 through 1992; and

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WHEREAS, Senator Petka has served honorably as Senate Deputy Republican Leader, from 2003 through 2006, and as a member of the Senate Executive, Executive Appointments, Judiciary, and Rules Committees; and

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WHEREAS, He became one of the chamber's most respected members, known for his vast knowledge of constitutional law and unwavering support for traditional American values, which he often shared in debate on the Senate floor and as a member of the Senate Executive and Judiciary Committees; and

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WHEREAS, Senator Petka's legislative accomplishments on behalf of the people of Illinois include sponsorship of landmark anti-crime legislation, including an anti-terrorism bill targeting domestic terrorists, Truth in Sentencing guidelines requiring violent offenders to serve their entire prison sentence, the child sex offender notification law, legislation that gave authorities new tools to combat gang crime and provided protections for crime victims, and legislation that closed the loophole in Illinois' child pornography law; and

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WHEREAS, His strong sense of traditional justice made Senator Petka a legislator ahead of the cultural curve; he authored a law that allowed DNA testing for those on Death Row to possibly avoid a wrongful conviction, helped to strengthen private property rights in cases involving eminent domain abuse by local government, and fought to ensure that the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens to keep and bear arms

1 are protected, while at the same time working to make sure that
2 those who violently misuse firearms are properly punished; and

3 WHEREAS, Senator Petka's efforts on behalf of the people of
4 the 42nd Senate District included spearheading efforts in the
5 General Assembly to funnel State assistance to repair the
6 schools in Plainfield destroyed by the 1990 tornado, working
7 with federal officials to get funding to rebuild St. Mary's
8 Immaculate Church and School that was also destroyed by the
9 tornado, sponsoring legislation creating the Joliet Arsenal
10 Development Authority, teaming up with Dr. Richard Zalar of
11 Joliet to convince State government to create a
12 first-of-its-kind alternative Alzheimer's care center, and
13 co-sponsoring the resolution authorizing construction of the
14 new Interstate 355 tollway; and

15 WHEREAS, In recognition of his leadership and expertise,
16 Senator Petka was asked to serve on the Illinois Death Penalty
17 Reform Panel in 2002 and cosponsored the recommended reforms to
18 restore integrity to the State's criminal justice system; and

19 WHEREAS, Senator Petka's long legislative career was also
20 marked by a number of honors, including ones from the Illinois
21 State's Attorney Association, the National Federation of
22 Independent Business, the State Chamber of Commerce, and the
23 Illinois Farm Bureau, recognizing his contributions to
24 anti-crime efforts, economic development, job creation, and
25 agriculture; and

26 WHEREAS, His long career in public service began first as a
27 high school history and math teacher where he earned the money
28 to put himself through law school at John Marshall; he then
29 became an accomplished Assistant State's Attorney in Will
30 County and was elected State's Attorney in 1976 by a vote of
31 the people; and he served in that capacity for 11 years; and

1 WHEREAS, He will continue his public service career as a
2 Circuit Court Judge, having been elected to that office on
3 November 7, 2006; and

4 WHEREAS, His commitment to public service is only surpassed
5 by his commitment to his family; his wife, Phyllis; his
6 children, Jennifer, Edward Jr., Tanya, and Melinda; and his
7 four grandchildren, Alexis Grace, Ryan Jacob, Brianna Grace,
8 and Nathan Wesley; therefore, be it

9 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL
10 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we thank Ed Petka for
11 his continued service to the people of Illinois and honor him
12 with this resolution; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
14 presented to Ed Petka with our best wishes.