



HR1635

LRB095 23113 KXB 53743 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 Gene H.
4 Graves of Springfield, who passed away on November 23, 2008;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, Gene Graves was born on December 10, 1928 outside
7 of Marion in Crittenden County, Kentucky; his parents were
8 Eugene H. Graves and Mayme Graves; he married Norma J. Jackson
9 on October 6, 1951 in East St. Louis; and

10 WHEREAS, Gene Graves served in the United States Air Force
11 and was honorably discharged at the rank of Staff Sergeant in
12 1949 at the age of 20; afterwards, he joined the Air Force
13 Reserve and was discharged at the rank of Second Lieutenant on
14 August 13, 1954; and

15 WHEREAS, Gene Graves earned his Bachelor of Science degree
16 from Southern Illinois University and served as president of
17 the Phi Sigma Kappa Fraternity; and

18 WHEREAS, Gene Graves began his career as a schoolteacher in
19 Elkton, where he taught until 1957; from 1957 to 1959, he was
20 employed with the Ford Motor Company in labor relations; he
21 then took a job with Southern Illinois University in the

1 community affairs department, concurrently serving as
2 president of the Madison/St. Clair County Urban League; and

3 WHEREAS, Gene Graves began his career in State government
4 in 1962, when he was appointed by Illinois Governor Otto Kerner
5 as executive director of the Board of Economic Development; in
6 1965, the Governor created the cabinet position of director of
7 the Department of Business Development, to which Mr. Graves was
8 named as the first director; under his directorship, which
9 involved many world trade tours and international agreements,
10 he and his wife met with numerous dignitaries and world
11 leaders, resulting in the State of Illinois becoming the number
12 one export state in the nation; under his administration,
13 Illinois also went from the number 12 to the third-ranked state
14 in the nation at attracting new industry; and

15 WHEREAS, Gene Graves was instrumental in the State of
16 Illinois being named by the Atomic Energy Commission as the
17 recipient of the atom smasher built in Weston; from 1969 to
18 1974, Gene worked as the special assistant to the president at
19 Southern Illinois University; afterwards, he took a job as
20 president of the Flamex Corporation in St. Petersburg, Florida;
21 he returned with his family to Springfield in 1975 and became
22 director of physical services of the Secretary of State's
23 office; he then worked for a short time as a realtor before his
24 retirement; and

1 WHEREAS, Gene Graves was well known amongst his peers for
2 his great appreciation for a good joke and a bad pun and his
3 penchant for telling both; he always looked forward to the
4 weekly "meeting of the minds" on Mondays at the Two Brothers
5 Lounge in Springfield; and

6 WHEREAS, Gene Graves was preceded in death by his parents
7 and his brother, William Graves; and

8 WHEREAS, Gene Graves is survived by his wife, Norma; his
9 sons, James Mitchell Graves (wife, Kim), Bradley Scott Graves
10 (wife, Judy), and Kenneth Byron Graves (wife, Barb); his
11 daughter, Leslie Janine Graves; his brother, Robert (wife,
12 Julie) Graves; his sister, Martina (husband, Loren) Wolfe; and
13 his nine grandchildren; therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
15 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
16 mourn, along with his family and friends, the passing of Gene
17 H. Graves; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
19 presented to the family of Gene Graves as an expression of our
20 sympathy.