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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 Leon Finney Sr. of Chicago, who passed away on April 4, 2008; and

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WHEREAS, Leon Finney Sr. was born in Mississippi; he was the son of entrepreneur T.J. Huddleston; he moved to Chicago around 1938, hoping to join the military; and

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WHEREAS, Leon Finney Sr. was the founder and owner of the Leon's Bar-B-Q chain; he founded the business in 1941, after the police broke up a bookie joint in the basement of a barbecue shop on Garfield Boulevard in Chicago; after the raid, the owner offered to sell the barbecue restaurant for \$700, the price of the refrigerator; after his father wired him the money, he opened Leon's Bar-B-Q, which has since become a staple of Chicago's culinary history and is frequently on food critic lists for the best ribs in Chicago; and

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WHEREAS, Leon Finney Sr. kept Leon's Bar-B-Q open continuously since 1941, except for a break in the 1950s when meat prices were too high; his late wife, Adeline, helped run the restaurants; he was active in running his restaurants until his health began to decline in 2002; and

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1 WHEREAS, Leon Finney Sr. was an active advocate of
2 African-American business and community organizations, helping
3 numerous African-Americans create many businesses in the City
4 of Chicago and beyond; and

5 WHEREAS, Leon Finney Sr. is survived by his six children,
6 Rev. Leon Finney Jr., Gwendlyn Woods, Michael, Michelle, Andre,
7 and Zenobia Rene; and his nine grandchildren; and

8 WHEREAS, Leon Finney Sr. will be remembered by all who knew
9 and loved him for his dedication to his profession and his
10 willingness to help his fellow entrepreneurs; therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL
12 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with
13 his family and friends, the passing of Leon Finney Sr.; and be
14 it further

15 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
16 presented to the family of Leon Finney Sr. as an expression of
17 our sympathy.