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1

SENATE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, During this session of the 95th General Assembly  
3 of Illinois, the nation lost one of its most principled,  
4 fearless, creative, humane, witty, literate, and influential  
5 political and cultural leaders with the death of William F.  
6 Buckley, Jr.; and

7           WHEREAS, William F. Buckley, Jr., was born on November 24,  
8 1925 in New York, New York, the sixth of ten gifted children in  
9 a family noted for its staunch American patriotism and its  
10 profound devotion to the Roman Catholic faith; and

11           WHEREAS, By dint of his parent's business obligations,  
12 William F. Buckley, Jr., was reared in Mexico, spoke Spanish as  
13 his first language, studied at the University of Mexico, and  
14 began a lifelong love affair with the people and civilization  
15 of Hispanoamerica; and

16           WHEREAS, William F. Buckley, Jr., soon became proficient in  
17 the English language, which he mastered and commanded with  
18 power and grace, and which he placed in the service of the  
19 worldwide cause of human liberty; and

20           WHEREAS, William F. Buckley, Jr., served our country in the  
21 enlisted ranks of the United States Army; and

1           WHEREAS, William F. Buckley, Jr., went on to a stellar  
2 career as an undergraduate and alumnus of Yale University,  
3 where he made his mark as editor of *The Yale Daily News* and as  
4 one of the most memorable debaters in that university's  
5 history; and

6           WHEREAS, William F. Buckley, Jr., returned to the service  
7 of our country for a brief tour of duty at the Central  
8 Intelligence Agency; and

9           WHEREAS, In the finest tradition of thoughtful and  
10 constructive criticism of a beloved institution, William F.  
11 Buckley, Jr., in 1951 wrote his first book, *God and Man at*  
12 *Yale*, a groundbreaking critique of educational practices at his  
13 *alma mater*, in which he opined "I believe that the duel between  
14 Christianity and atheism is the most important in the world. I  
15 further believe that the struggle between individualism and  
16 collectivism is the same struggle reproduced on another level",  
17 and which was published by Henry Regnery of Illinois and the  
18 Chicago-based Regnery Publishing Company; and

19           WHEREAS, William F. Buckley, Jr., went on to write and edit  
20 more than 60 books, including highly influential works of  
21 political controversy, among them *Up from Liberalism* (1959),  
22 *Rumbles Left and Right* (1963), *The Jeweler's Eye* (1968), *Four*

1 *Reforms: A Guide for the Seventies* (1973), *United Nations*  
2 *Journal: A Delegate's Odyssey* (1974), *Right Reason* (1985),  
3 *Gratitude: Reflections on What We Owe our Country* (1990), *In*  
4 *Search of Anti-Semitism* (1992), and *The Fall of the Berlin Wall*  
5 (2004); several compelling works of biography and  
6 autobiography, among them *McCarthy and His Enemies* (1954), *The*  
7 *Unmaking of a Mayor* (1965), *Cruising Speed: A Documentary*  
8 (1971), *Overdrive* (1983), *On the Firing Line: The Public Life*  
9 *of Our Public Figures* (1989), *Happy Days Were Here Again:*  
10 *Reflections of a Libertarian Journalist* (1993), *Nearer My God:*  
11 *An Autobiography of Faith* (1997), *Miles Gone By: A Literary*  
12 *Autobiography* (2004), and *Flying High: Remembering Barry*  
13 *Goldwater* (2008); a number of light and serious novels, among  
14 them *The Temptation of Wilfred Malachy* (1985) and *The Rake*  
15 (2007); and his even dozen of "Blackford Oakes" espionage  
16 novels, which began with *Saving the Queen* (1976) and ended with  
17 *Last Call for Blackford Oakes* (2005); and

18 WHEREAS, In 1955, William F. Buckley, Jr., founded *National*  
19 *Review* magazine, a highly-respected journal of conservative  
20 thought and opinion, in whose inaugural edition he defined the  
21 magazine's mission with the challenging words that it "stands  
22 athwart history, yelling Stop, at a time when no one is  
23 inclined to do so, or to have much patience with those who so  
24 urge it"; and

1           WHEREAS, William F. Buckley, Jr., served *National Review* as  
2 Editor-in-Chief for 35 years and as Editor-at-Large for another  
3 18 years until his death; the magazine survives to this day in  
4 both print and on-line editions and is one of the most  
5 widely-read and influential journals of opinion and criticism  
6 in history; and

7           WHEREAS, In his early writings in *National Review*, William  
8 F. Buckley, Jr., defined the essence of libertarian convictions  
9 in modern America in these words: "It is the job of centralized  
10 government (in peacetime) to protect its citizens' lives,  
11 liberty and property. All other activities of government tend  
12 to diminish freedom and hamper progress. The growth of  
13 government (the dominant social feature of this century) must  
14 be fought relentlessly. In this great social conflict of the  
15 era, we are, without reservations, on the libertarian side";  
16 and

17           WHEREAS, In his early writings in *National Review*, William  
18 F. Buckley, Jr., similarly defined the essence of conservative  
19 convictions in these words: "The profound crisis of our era is,  
20 in essence, the conflict between the Social Engineers, who seek  
21 to adjust mankind to conform with scientific utopias, and the  
22 disciples of Truth, who defend the organic moral order. We  
23 believe that truth is neither arrived at nor illuminated by  
24 monitoring election results, binding though these are for other

1 purposes, but by other means, including a study of human  
2 experience. On this point we are, without reservations, on the  
3 conservative side"; and

4 WHEREAS, In fusing libertarian ideals with conservative  
5 precepts, William F. Buckley, Jr., more than any other  
6 individual, brought into being the modern American  
7 conservative movement which he defined as a very American  
8 approach to life, knowing that the government is not your  
9 master, that God endows the individual, that America is good,  
10 that freedom is good and must be defended, and communism is  
11 very, very bad; and

12 WHEREAS, William F. Buckley, Jr., declared in 1959, "I mean  
13 to live my life an obedient man, but obedient to God,  
14 subservient to the wisdom of my ancestors; never to the  
15 authority of political truths arrived at yesterday at the  
16 voting booth"; and

17 WHEREAS, William F. Buckley, Jr., went on to write more  
18 than 4,500,000 words in more than 5,600 editions of his  
19 semi-weekly newspaper column, "On the Right", through which he  
20 taught a bright and inspiring vision of a free and decent  
21 society to his fellow Americans, and urged them to act to  
22 realize that vision; and

1           WHEREAS, William F. Buckley, Jr., helped to found the  
2           lasting institutions of the modern conservative movement,  
3           including Young Americans for Freedom, which was born at his  
4           family's home in Sharon, Connecticut in 1960; the American  
5           Conservative Union; and the movement's premier debating forum,  
6           The Philadelphia Society, which was founded in Chicago in 1965;  
7           and

8           WHEREAS, Throughout his career, in public and in private,  
9           William F. Buckley, Jr., invested his intellectual powers,  
10          moral fervor, and personal prestige in fierce opposition to all  
11          forms of bigotry, including religious and racial prejudice, in  
12          American life; and

13          WHEREAS, In 1965, William F. Buckley, Jr., ran for Mayor of  
14          New York City in a campaign so focused on principle, so rich in  
15          innovative ideas about modern urban governance, and so devoted  
16          to reform and transparency in politics, that, when asked what  
17          he would do first if elected, he memorably quipped, "Demand a  
18          recount!"; and

19          WHEREAS, William F. Buckley, Jr., created and hosted a  
20          long-running, Emmy Award-winning, weekly television debate  
21          program, "Firing Line", which elevated the medium and forever  
22          changed, for the better, the standards of broadcast discourse;  
23          and

1           WHEREAS, To Mr. Buckley's enormous delight, the historian  
2 Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., termed him "the scourge of  
3 liberalism" and President Ronald Reagan declared, "You didn't  
4 just part the Red Sea-you rolled it back, dried it up and left  
5 exposed, for all the world to see, the naked desert that is  
6 statism"; and

7           WHEREAS, In 1991, the nation's highest civilian honor was  
8 conferred upon William F. Buckley, Jr., when he received the  
9 Presidential Medal of Freedom; and

10           WHEREAS, William F. Buckley, Jr., was a frequent and  
11 memorable visitor to Illinois, where, among countless other  
12 contributions to the political and cultural life of the Land of  
13 Lincoln, on May 11, 1954, at the Union League Club in Chicago,  
14 he debated John Nuveen on the life and work of Senator Joseph  
15 McCarthy; on September 14, 1962, at the Medinah Temple in  
16 Chicago, in a debate moderated by Irv Kupcinet, he took on  
17 Norman Mailer on "The Real Nature of the Right Wing in  
18 America"; on November 2, 1962, at the Palmer House in Chicago,  
19 he addressed the Executives Club of Chicago on the Cuban  
20 Missile Crisis; on December 15, 1965, at Sinai Temple in  
21 Chicago, he debated John P. Roche on the Vietnam War; on  
22 December 1, 1967, he addressed the Conservative Club of Chicago  
23 on "The Breakdown in Urban Law"; in August of 1968, during the

1 Democratic National Convention in Chicago, he debated Gore  
2 Vidal in a series of dramatic daily confrontations on national  
3 television; on October 3, 1971, under the sponsorship of The  
4 University of Chicago at the downtown studios of WTTW, he  
5 debated the Reverend Jesse Jackson in a nationally-broadcast  
6 episode of "Firing Line"; and, year after year, he attended and  
7 spoke at meetings of The Philadelphia Society which, named for  
8 the place of the American Founding, was established, and has  
9 often met, in Chicago; and

10 WHEREAS, Some of the closest friends, colleagues,  
11 companions, and collaborators of William F. Buckley, Jr., were  
12 natives, citizens, and residents of Illinois, including James  
13 Burnham, Jameson G. Campaigne, Jr., Mircea Eliade, James R.  
14 Evans, Edwin J. Feulner, Jr., Milton Friedman, John A. Howard,  
15 Henry J. Hyde, David A. Keene, Willmoore Kendall, Joseph A.  
16 Morris, Revilo P. Oliver, Ronald Reagan, Henry Regnery, William  
17 A. Rusher, Richard M. Weaver, George F. Will, and Eliseo Vivas,  
18 many of whom survive him; and

19 WHEREAS, For more than 56 years, William F. Buckley, Jr.,  
20 was married to the former Patricia Alden Austin Taylor, a  
21 devoted wife, mother, homemaker, philanthropist, and notable  
22 social figure, before her death in April of 2007; and

23 WHEREAS, William F. Buckley, Jr., died on February 27,



1 2008, in Stamford, Connecticut; he is survived by his son,  
2 Christopher, of Washington, D.C., his sisters Priscilla L.  
3 Buckley, of Sharon, Connecticut, Patricia Buckley Bozell, of  
4 Washington, D.C., and Carol Buckley, of Columbia, South  
5 Carolina, his brothers James L. Buckley, of Sharon,  
6 Connecticut, and F. Reid Buckley, of Camden, South Carolina;  
7 and his granddaughter and grandson; and

8 WHEREAS, William F. Buckley, Jr., is rightly remembered as  
9 a gentleman and intellectual who helped shape the modern  
10 culture of America with his rigorous mind, systematic  
11 principles, magnetic charm, mastery of language, singular  
12 personal style, vast private kindness and generosity, and  
13 ever-present good humor; therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL  
15 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that the Senate recalls and  
16 honors the life of William F. Buckley, Jr., for his lifelong  
17 devotion to principles of liberty and justice, his love of  
18 America and the American people, his felicitous command of  
19 language, his commitment to serious debate and the free  
20 exchange of information and ideas, his elevating contributions  
21 to journalism, broadcasting, and public discourse, and his  
22 remarkable impact on modern history; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the Senate mourns the death of William F.

1 Buckley, Jr., and expresses its profound condolences to his  
2 family and his friends; and be it further

3       RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this Resolution be  
4 presented to the family of William F. Buckley, Jr., and to his  
5 colleagues at National Review magazine and at The Philadelphia  
6 Society.