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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 Cyrus Johnson of Jackson, Tennessee, formerly of Alton, who passed away on February 27, 2009; and

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WHEREAS, Cyrus Johnson was born on February 18, 1929 in Alton; his parents were Cyrus Leroy and Jennie Cornelia (Keen) Johnson; and

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WHEREAS, Cyrus Johnson attended school at Woods School and Foster Township; he continued his education at Lovejoy School and Alton Senior High School; he attended college at Shurtleff College and the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana, where he earned his bachelor's degree in urban land economics in 1956 and his master's degree in social science in 1959; after graduating, he pursued numerous corporate training opportunities, including stints at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of Pittsburgh, and Harvard University's Advanced Management Program 69, where he served as class president; and

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WHEREAS, Cyrus Johnson served in the United States Army from 1950 to 1952, he went through basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri before serving his tour of duty in Germany during the Korean Conflict; and

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1           WHEREAS, Cyrus Johnson was well known for his incredible  
2 work ethic, a trait honed on his family's farm; while attending  
3 the University of Illinois, he served as head waiter and  
4 assistant manager of food services at the Urbana Lincoln Motor  
5 Inn; after his graduate studies, he and his family went to  
6 Chicago, where Mr. Johnson served for 14 years at the Illinois  
7 Bell Telephone Company as the public office manager; he  
8 received many promotions during his tenure, ending his career  
9 as a district commercial manager; in 1973, he was hired at  
10 General Mills Incorporated to serve as the first  
11 African-American vice president of the company, a position he  
12 occupied for 18 years until his retirement; following his  
13 retirement, he became a full-time gentleman farmer; and

14           WHEREAS, Throughout his life, Cyrus Johnson served his  
15 community in leadership positions on numerous local and  
16 national nonprofit, professional, corporate, and university  
17 boards; and

18           WHEREAS, Cyrus Johnson was preceded in death by parents and  
19 his sister, Cora Darden; and

20           WHEREAS, Cyrus Johnson is survived by his wife of 54 years,  
21 Charlotte E. (Kenniebrew) Johnson; his daughters, Judie  
22 Johnson and Renee Johnson; his favorite granddaughter, Jennie

1 M. Johnson McFadden; his sisters and brothers, Virginia Ward  
2 (Paul), Lucille Piggott (Bert), Mary Hyndman, Harold Johnson  
3 (Evelyn), Robert Darden (husband of Cora), William Johnson  
4 (Olivia "Sue"), Lloyd Johnson (Minnie), Alvin Johnson  
5 (Thelma), and Adele Carpenter (Willi); his many nieces and  
6 nephews; his large extended family; and his friend and mentor,  
7 James A. Summer; therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL  
9 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with  
10 his family and friends, the passing of Cyrus Johnson; and be it  
11 further

12 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
13 presented to the family of Cyrus Johnson as an expression of  
14 our sympathy.