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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 Johnnie Mae Strickland, who passed away on March 17, 2009; and

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WHEREAS, Johnnie Mae Strickland, the eldest of five children, was born in DeKalb, Mississippi, on June 30, 1914, to the union of Westley and Ella (Scott) McCaskill; the family moved to East St. Louis in 1927; and

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WHEREAS, She attended schools in Meridian, Mississippi and East St. Louis; in East St. Louis, the family worshipped at Wesley Methodist Church; Johnnie married Roy Mason in 1935 and together they celebrated the births of four daughters, Audrey, Marian, Barbara and Beatrice; this marriage ended and Johnnie later met and married Lamar Strickland in 1964; the couple moved from Chicago to Detroit, Michigan where they enjoyed all of the blessings God intended for the marriage relationship until Lamar's passing; Johnnie was employed by the Detroit Public School System as a Teacher's Aide and Food Service Assistant; and

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WHEREAS, Johnnie was affectionately called 'Johnnie Ma' by her grandchildren and their offspring or Gretchen, a name given to her by her youngest daughter Bea; in Detroit, Johnnie was a

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1 member of the Calvary Baptist Church where she faithfully  
2 participated in Bible classes, Sunday school, and church camp  
3 activities; five years ago, Johnnie moved to Chicago to live  
4 with Bea, where they both shared their love of the Lord and  
5 worshipped at Salem Baptist Church of Chicago; Johnnie's  
6 greatest joy was reading scripture and being active in the  
7 church; learning was a life-long endeavor and she sought to  
8 model that virtue to her family and friends when, at the age of  
9 78, she received her G.E.D; and

10 WHEREAS, As a young mother, Johnnie loved to sew and  
11 delighted in making outfits for her daughters; in later years  
12 she was eternally famous within the family for her "bone-ware",  
13 items such as necklaces and vases fashioned from left-over meal  
14 bones; this beloved child of God found strength and comfort in  
15 music, especially the hymns "In the Garden" and "My Hope is  
16 Built" which were among her favorites; she would often be found  
17 offering expressions of thanksgiving to her God for the many  
18 blessings bestowed upon her; her journey with the Lord was  
19 important to her and to keep others encouraged, Johnnie would  
20 often present Bibles as gifts for graduations, weddings, and  
21 other momentous occasions; and

22 WHEREAS, Her daughter, Barbara Behm, preceded her in death;  
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1           WHEREAS, Johnnie's life was well-lived and she will be  
2 missed; she leaves to cherish her precious memory three  
3 daughters, Audrey (Howard) Brookins, Marian Jackson, and Bea  
4 Sockwell; she also leaves thirteen grandchildren; eighteen  
5 great grandchildren; a brother-in-law, Willie Campbell, Sr.; a  
6 sister-in-law, Artia Mason; and a host of nieces, nephews,  
7 cousins, and friends who will continue as a living legacy to  
8 Johnnie Mae; therefore, be it

9           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL  
10 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with  
11 her family and friends, the passing of Johnnie Mae Strickland;  
12 and be it further

13           RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
14 presented to the family of Johnnie Mae Strickland as a symbol  
15 of our sincere sympathy.