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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 Arturo Velasquez, who passed away on April 17, 2009; and

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WHEREAS, Arturo Velasquez was born in 1915 in Tototlan, Jalisco, Mexico; he came to the United States at the age of eight; he graduated from Haines Elementary School and attended Crane Technical High School; he received an Honorary Doctorate of Public Service in 1981 from the National College of Education and a Doctorate of Public Service from Saint Xavier College in 1988; and

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WHEREAS, In 1938, during the "Great Depression", Arturo Velasquez founded the Velasquez Automatic Music Company at 4539 South Ashland Avenue in the Back of the Yards neighborhood; for many years, he sold arcade games and Mexican music for jukeboxes to Latino restaurants; he was well known in his neighborhood as a generous supporter of programs and scholarships to help young people there; and

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WHEREAS, Arturo Velasquez served his country with pride and distinction as a member of the United States Army during World War II; and

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1 WHEREAS, Arturo Velasquez was the founder of the Illinois
2 Federation of Mexican Americans in 1958; he co-founded in 1967
3 and served as charter president of the Azteca Lions Club; he
4 also played key roles in founding the Mexican-American Chamber
5 of Commerce of Illinois, the Federation of Mexican-Americans,
6 the Spanish Speaking Study Commission, the Mexican Civic
7 Society, and the Mexican-American Democrats of Cook County,
8 among many others; and

9 WHEREAS, Arturo Velasquez served as a trustee of the City
10 Colleges of Chicago for 10 years; in 2008, Richard J. Daley
11 College rededicated and renamed its West Side Technical
12 Institute the Arturo Velasquez West Side Technical Institute in
13 honor of Mr. Velasquez and his work; and

14 WHEREAS, Arturo Velasquez gave more than fifty years of
15 dedicated service to the Cordi-Marian Settlement House; he was
16 the recipient of numerous awards in recognition of his
17 outstanding contributions, including the American Legion
18 Manuel Perez Post (#1017) 1964 "Man of the Year" award, the
19 Counsel General of Mexico's 1967 "Man of the Year" award, the
20 Boys and Girls Club of Chicago's Chairman of the Board and 1980
21 Volunteer of the Year awards, the City Colleges of Chicago
22 Foundation's 1984 "Man of the Year" award, the Mexican Civic
23 Society's 1986 "Man of the Year" award, the St. Augustine
24 College's "Puente" Award, "The Ohtli" Award, Mexico's highest

1 honor, The Chicago Historical Society's 2002 "Making History"
2 Award, and the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's 2006
3 "Pipila" Award; and

4 WHEREAS, Arturo Velasquez is survived by his wife of 72
5 years, Shirley; his children, Arthur, Edward, Carmen, and Maria
6 Elena; his 11 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren; and his
7 siblings, Marina, Eliseo, Josefina, and Elisia; therefore, be
8 it

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

13 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
14 presented to the family of Arturo Velasquez as an expression of
15 our sympathy.