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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 Willie David Cooper, who passed away on June 19, 2009; and

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WHEREAS, David Cooper was born on May 27, 1949 in Birmingham, Alabama; his parents were JD and Zattie Mae Cooper; he and his family moved to La Grange in 1955 and then to Maywood in 1957; he attended Washington Elementary and graduated from Proviso East High School in 1967; during high school, he was a standout halfback on the high school football team and a well respected member of the concert choir; he continued his education at Triton College in River Grove, where he trained as a counselor and co-founded the Black Student Association and the Baha'i Club; and

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WHEREAS, David Cooper provided professional services as a counselor to at-risk youths throughout the State of Illinois; he also dealt with the elderly and special needs clients, including those with cerebral palsy, Down's syndrome, deafness, quadriplegia, and autism; and

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WHEREAS, David Cooper was a former member of the Second Baptist Church in La Grange; in 1967, he embraced the teachings of the Baha'i Faith, to which he remained dedicated for the

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1 rest of his life as a path to help bring about social justice,  
2 the oneness of humanity, and the unity of religion; as a highly  
3 reputed community activist and organizer, he was the founder  
4 and chair of the Maywood Residents' Council, an association of  
5 125 block clubs whose goal it was to work with residents to  
6 improve the quality of community life; he served as a  
7 Recreation Counselor for the Village of Maywood and formerly  
8 served as a Counselor for the Ray Graham Association, Hart  
9 Grove Hospital, Rivers Edge Hospital, and Arise, Inc.; he was  
10 also one of the original members of the Maywood Alliance for  
11 Better Government, a group responsible for determining the  
12 viability of candidates for local elections; in the fall of  
13 2004, he moved to the Madison, Wisconsin area, where he  
14 remained until his passing; and

15 WHEREAS, David Cooper was the author of a self-published  
16 volume entitled "Through the Pupil of the Eye" a collection of  
17 poems which examined principles of personal responsibility,  
18 the plight and injustices of the oppressed, and youth issues  
19 and made a fervent appeal to approach life on its own terms;  
20 his works were recorded and performed in public and private  
21 venues with keyboardist and composer Joah Greengus as "The Sons  
22 of Light" in consciousness-raising gatherings from 1995  
23 through 2005; he also had a great talent and appreciation for  
24 fine foods and dining and offered catering services during his  
25 later years in Maywood; and

1           WHEREAS, David Cooper was preceded in death by his  
2 brothers, JD Cooper, Jr., and Danny K. Cooper; his mother,  
3 Zattie Mae Cooper; and his grandmother, Tanner Wheeler; and

4           WHEREAS, David Cooper is survived by his brother, Leo  
5 Cooper and his wife, Kathy; his aunt, Mary E. Lucas; and his  
6 numerous friends and co-workers; and

7           WHEREAS, David Cooper will be remembered by all who knew  
8 and loved him as a wonderful man, whose passion and dedication  
9 for his faith, his family, his friends, his writing, and his  
10 cooking were unmatched; therefore, be it

11           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL  
12 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with  
13 his family and friends, the passing of Willie David Cooper; and  
14 be it further

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