



SR1098

LRB096 24593 KXB 44424 r

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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 Lonnie E. Clark Sr. of Urbana; and

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WHEREAS, Lonnie E. Clark Sr. was born May 18, 1940, in Champaign, to the union of the Reverend Jesse D. Clark and Erma D. Luter Clark; he married Joan Graham on July 21, 1962; Lonnie accepted Christ at an early age under the leadership of the Reverend E. Kilgore; and

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WHEREAS, He attended Champaign schools and graduated from Champaign High School in 1959; he accepted a scholarship to play football and run track at St. Augustine's College in Raleigh, North Carolina, and completed additional advanced coursework at the Institute of Labor and Industry at the University of Illinois; he later received a degree in political science at Eastern Illinois University; and

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WHEREAS, During the 1960s, when local Champaign residents were picketing certain businesses that refused to hire blacks in prominent positions, he participated in the protests; as a result, Lonnie was the first African-American hired at Goldblatt's Department Store and within six months was promoted to the position of manager of the men's clothing department; and

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1           WHEREAS, With a growing interest in the plight of his  
2 community and various civic concerns, he entered the public  
3 arena as an advocate for human rights and had the following  
4 achievements: he was one of the founders of the Frances Nelson  
5 Health Center; he was chairman of the board of directors for  
6 Opportunities Industrialization Center, founded by the late  
7 Dr. Leon Sullivan; he was a member of the committee to  
8 establish the first "Black Mom's Day" weekend at the University  
9 of Illinois; he assisted in the programming for students in the  
10 initial Project 500 EOP Program at the University of Illinois;  
11 he was a member of the Douglas Center Advisory Committee; he  
12 was elected president of the Illinois Affirmative Action  
13 Association for the State of Illinois; he was the first  
14 African-American appointed to the Urbana Plan Commission; he  
15 served two four-year elected terms on the Urbana City Council  
16 representing Ward 3, and as alderman introduced legislation to  
17 designate Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday as a holiday for  
18 the City of Urbana; and

19           WHEREAS, In addition, he successfully led the  
20 demonstration to close an adult bookstore at Goodwin and  
21 University Avenues in proximity to a day care center and King  
22 School; and in 2002 he was selected by The News-Gazette as one  
23 of the "150 Most Important People in Champaign County"; and

1           WHEREAS, Lonnie Clark was president and co-owner, with J.W.  
2           Pirtle, treasurer, of WBCP 1580 AM, East Central Illinois'  
3           first African-American-owned radio station; he was also active  
4           in the following affiliations: the DUC Golf Club; the Community  
5           Reinvestment Act Advisory Board to Busey Bank; the Board of  
6           Directors of Champaign County Crimestoppers; the National  
7           Association for the Advancement of Colored People; the Urban  
8           League of Champaign County; the Foundation for Provena Covenant  
9           Medical Center; and the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity as a life  
10          member of the organization; and

11          WHEREAS, He retired from the University of Illinois after  
12          33 years as a labor relations specialist, and remained active  
13          in his quest for equal opportunities in his community; he had a  
14          passion for golf; and he loved sports, dance, and music,  
15          particularly smooth jazz; and

16          WHEREAS, He was preceded in death by his parents; his five  
17          sisters, Rosalee Virginia Clark, Imogene Casmer, Carolyne  
18          Wilson, Ruth DeShong, and Lucille Roberts; and his brother,  
19          Marvin Clark; and

20          WHEREAS, Lonnie Clark leaves to cherish his memories his  
21          wife and children, Jeffrey L. (Bernita) Clark and Lonnie E.  
22          Clark II; his brothers, Jesse D. (Lucille) Clark and Clyde  
23          Warren (Isola) Clark; his lifelong friend, Thomas Brown; and a

1 host of relatives and friends; therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL  
3 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with  
4 his family, friends, and the many people whose lives he  
5 touched, the passing of Lonnie Clark; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
7 presented to the family of Lonnie Clark as a symbol of our  
8 sincere sympathy.