



HR0079

LRB097 10491 KXB 50904 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of Irving Maurice King of Chicago on February 6, 2011; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. King was born on July 22, 1931 in Ashland, Virginia, the youngest of six children of Charles Henry King and Martha Bradby King, Native Americans descended from the Chickahominy, Cherokee, and Pamunkey nations; and

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WHEREAS, Growing up during a time of racial segregation, Mr. King attended African-American schools, married an African-American woman, and considered himself black; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. King, not allowed to attend schools closer to his home, graduated from Virginia Randolph Community High School in Henrico County and received a four-year scholarship to Hampton Institute, a historically black college where he graduated with honors with a degree in English, received a John Hay Whitney Fellowship to Yale Law School, and met his future wife of 60 years, Lillian; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. King was inspired to go to law school by his admiration for the NAACP's chief counsel, Thurgood Marshall, and was among three African-Americans listed in Yale Law

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1 School's graduating class of 1958; and

2 WHEREAS, When recruiters from law firms came to Yale, they
3 liked Mr. King but they would not hire him because of his race;
4 one of his Yale professors saw the barriers Mr. King was facing
5 and put in a call to the Chicago law firm of Eugene Cotton;
6 Cotton offered Mr. King a job and eventually he became a
7 partner and the firm added his name to become Cotton, Watt,
8 Jones and King; and

9 WHEREAS, Mr. King fought for workers' rights and civil
10 rights for more than 50 years, often taking cases pro bono; he
11 handled landmark cases including an Iowa packinghouse case that
12 contributed to a National Labor Relations Board requirement
13 that unionized firms must bargain with workers before
14 relocating; he worked with legendary civil rights leader Fannie
15 Lou Hamer to challenge voting rights violations against
16 African-Americans in Mississippi; and he helped win a
17 pioneering sex-discrimination case against a major airline
18 when it fired a female flight attendant for getting married;
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20 WHEREAS, Mr. King liked fishing in Wisconsin and he loved
21 music, especially Beethoven and Mahler; and

22 WHEREAS, Mr. King is survived by his wife, Lillian; his

1 sons, Michael and Alan; his daughter, Karen; his sisters, Alma
2 Winston and Verna Gray; his three granddaughters; and his
3 great-granddaughter; therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
5 NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
6 we mourn, along with his family and friends, the passing of
7 Irving King; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
9 presented to the family of Irving King as a symbol of our
10 deepest sympathies and great esteem.