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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of Edna
4 Williams, who passed away on December 31, 2012; and

5 WHEREAS, Edna Williams was a native of Chicago and attended
6 Chicago public schools; while in elementary school, she began
7 her vocal studies with the distinguished vocal teacher, Stella
8 Sanger, at the Chicago Conservatory of Music, and piano with
9 Anna Maitland and Ida B. Davis; after graduating from Parker
10 High School, she furthered her studies by enrolling for 2 years
11 at the former Wilson Junior College (now Kennedy-King College),
12 where she served as President of the Music Club, and one year
13 at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana, where she
14 studied voice with professor LeRoy Hamp; and

15 WHEREAS, In 1954, Edna Williams enrolled at the Chicago
16 Musical College of Roosevelt University, studying piano with
17 Dr. Felix Ganz and voice with the eminent Dr. Harvey Rignel;
18 she subsequently earned her bachelor's degree in music in 1957
19 and her master's degree in music in 1959; while attending
20 Roosevelt, she was the recipient of the Sue Cowan Hintz Voice
21 Award, the Oliver Ditson Voice Scholarship, and the coveted
22 John Hay Whitney Fellowship, which afforded her 15 months of
23 study in Vienna, Austria, with such fine teachers as Baron Hans

1 Karg-Bebenburg and Professor Erik Werba; while in Austria, she
2 was presented in 2 recitals and was critically acclaimed; upon
3 her return to the United States in 1960, she toured Illinois,
4 Indiana, and Ohio in recital and sang many times on Chicago
5 radio and television; and

6 WHEREAS, In 1965, Edna Williams joined the faculty of
7 Northern Illinois University, where she retired in 1994 as a
8 Professor of Music; she also presented faculty recitals,
9 appeared as a soloist with the choral ensembles and the NIU
10 Philharmonic, and sang at many of the leading churches of all
11 denominations in the community; and

12 WHEREAS, Edna Williams was a former professional member of
13 the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Chorus and appeared on several
14 occasions as a soprano soloist with the Chicago Chamber
15 Orchestra; for over 20 years, she was the soprano soloist in
16 the annual presentation of Handel's "Messiah"; in 1977, she
17 appeared a guest soloist with the Symphony Orchestra of
18 Stavanger, Norway, performing repertoire in Norwegian and
19 English; in 1983, she was presented in concert in the Martin
20 Luther King, Jr. Chapel on the campus of Morehouse College in
21 Atlanta, Georgia; and

22 WHEREAS, Edna Williams was a member of the National
23 Association of Negro Musicians, Inc., where she served as a

1 board member, chairperson of the Artists Directory, and
2 national and regional scholarship chairperson; she also served
3 as second vice-president and scholarship chairperson of the
4 Chicago Music Association; and

5 WHEREAS, Edna Williams was a life-long member of Monumental
6 Baptist Church and was appointed to serve as the church's
7 Minister of Music in 1992; she also served on the Monumental
8 Credit Union Scholarship Committee and served as the
9 organization's treasurer and first president; and

10 WHEREAS, In 1989, Edna Williams was the recipient of an
11 honorary Doctor of Humanities degree from the Chicago Baptist
12 Institute in recognition of her achievements and contributions
13 to the Christian ministry; therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
15 NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
16 we mourn, along with her family and friends, the passing of
17 Edna Williams; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
19 presented to the family of Edna Williams as an expression of
20 our sympathy.