



SR0075

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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 Irving M. King of Chicago, who passed away on February 6, 2011; and

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WHEREAS, Irving King was born in Ashland, Virginia; his parents were Native Americans from the Pamunkey Nation; and

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WHEREAS, Irving King met his loving wife, Lillian, at Hampton University in Virginia, a historically black college; he was inspired to go to law school by his admiration for the NAACP's chief counsel, Thurgood Marshall, who became the first African-American on the U.S. Supreme Court; he was subsequently accepted at Yale University and was among the few African-Americans listed in Yale Law School's graduating class of 1958; and

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WHEREAS, After facing numerous barriers on account of his race, Irving King was offered a position with the Chicago law firm of Eugene Cotton, which represented aviation workers, machinists, printers and meat-packers; eventually, Mr. King's name was added to the shingle of Cotton, Watt, Jones, & King; and

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WHEREAS, Irving King was well known for his role in

1 numerous civil rights court cases during the 1960s and 1970s
2 and his tenacious advocacy of the working man; during his
3 career, he worked with legendary civil rights leader Fannie Lou
4 Hamer to challenge questionable polling practices in
5 Mississippi; he helped to win a pioneering case against United
6 Airlines when it fired Mary Burke Sprogis for getting married
7 in 1966, helping her to win reinstatement and back pay; his
8 work on an Iowa packinghouse case contributed to a National
9 Labor Relations Board requirement that unionized firms must
10 bargain with workers first if a company is considering a move;
11 he also worked with "Chicago Seven" attorney William M.
12 Kuntsler and others to represent Fannie Lou Hamer when she
13 challenged the historic 1967 election in Sunflower,
14 Mississippi, when she alleged voting-rights violations ranging
15 from blacks being kept out of the polling place to insufficient
16 voting assistance for some illiterate African-Americans; and

17 WHEREAS, Irving King enjoyed fishing in Wisconsin on land
18 that still belongs to his relatives in Virginia; he also
19 enjoyed music, especially the works of Beethoven and Mahler;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, Irving King is survived by his loving wife,
22 Lillian; his children, Alan, Karen, and Michael; his sisters,
23 Alma Winston and Verna Gray; his three granddaughters; and his
24 great-granddaughter; therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL
2 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with
3 his family and friends, the passing of Irving M. King; and be
4 it further

5 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
6 presented to the family of Irving King as an expression of our
7 sympathy.