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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 Isabella C. "Madear" (nee Connolly) Taylor of Chicago, who passed away on January 5, 2014; and

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WHEREAS, Isabella Taylor was born on August 11, 1909 to Toney and Lena Connolly in Savage, Mississippi; she married Luke Taylor on April 12, 1931; she received her teaching certificate from the State of Mississippi in 1930 and began teaching even before earning her high school diploma, which she received in 1950; she received her bachelor's degree in elementary education in 1959 from Mississippi Industrial College; and

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WHEREAS, Isabella Taylor began her teaching career in a "one room schoolhouse", including Prichard Elementary School in Tunica, Mississippi; she then taught at Rosa Fort Elementary School from 1961 until her retirement in 1973; and

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WHEREAS, Isabella Taylor pledged Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. in 1974 and became a life-time member; she was the oldest living soror in the State of Illinois and was featured as the cover girl in the March 2013 issue of Zeta Tau Zeta's magazine, and in late 2013, the Isabella C. Taylor Scholarship was created in honor for her services and commitment to education;

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1 and

2 WHEREAS, Isabella Taylor settled in Chicago in the
3 mid-1970s and joined the Allen Metropolitan Christian
4 Methodist Episcopal Church, where she was involved in many
5 church auxiliaries, including the Missionary Society, the
6 Young at Heart, and the Stewardess Board; she served as the
7 Stewardess Chaplain of the Third Episcopal District for several
8 decades; she taught Sunday school, authored songs, and traveled
9 regularly to church conferences to deliver speeches and helped
10 to raise funds by entering her great-grandchildren and
11 great-great-grandchildren in the annual baby contest; and

12 WHEREAS, Isabella Taylor had an undeniable commitment to
13 her family as well as to education; she attended the graduation
14 ceremonies for all family members from elementary to graduate
15 schools, including medical and law schools; and

16 WHEREAS, Isabella Taylor was known for her inspirational
17 words and expressions, which were displayed in churches,
18 schools, newspapers, and on television; her first play was
19 performed at age 16; in 1980, she appeared on PBS to represent
20 her sorority and recite original works of poetry; from 1996
21 through 2000, she authored 2 poetry books and a book of prose
22 and one of her poems won second-place at the Gwendolyn Brooks
23 Writer's Conference; and

1 WHEREAS, Isabella Taylor kept her razor-sharp intellect
2 throughout her years by completing 10 to 12 crossword puzzles
3 daily and playing solitaire and Scrabble regularly on her
4 computer; she also kept active as an Avon representative, a
5 member of the National Association for the Advancement of
6 Colored People, a member of the Mississippi Teachers's
7 Association, a founding member of Tunica's Homemakers Club, and
8 as a Girl Scout Brownie Leader; and

9 WHEREAS, Isabella Taylor was preceded in death by her
10 husband, Luke, and her sons, Menrose T. Hall, Vernice T.
11 Brownlee, and Calvin Taylor; and

12 WHEREAS, Isabella Taylor is survived by her children,
13 LeeDale Taylor, Marjorie James, Hosea Taylor, CL (Irene)
14 Taylor, Doretha Walker, Eunice Hobbs, and Melvin (Renee)
15 Taylor; her sisters, Ora Mae Rushing and Fannie Taylor; her 35
16 grandchildren; her 72 great-grandchildren; her 25
17 great-great-grandchildren; her son-in-law, Thomas O. Brownlee,
18 Sr.; her daughter-in-law, Sonia Taylor; and a host of other
19 relatives, sorors, and friends; therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL
21 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
22 Isabella C. "Madear" Taylor, and extend our sincere condolences

1 to her family, friends, and all who knew and loved her; and be
2 it further

3 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
4 presented to the family of Isabella Taylor as an expression of
5 our deepest sympathy.