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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the deaths of John R. and Reta A. Dowling of Watseka, who both passed away on June 17, 2018; and

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WHEREAS, John Dowling was born in Murrayville to John W. and Hattie Mae (Cooper) Dowling on August 20, 1933; Reta Dowling was born in Danville to Myron R. and Blanche H. (McGahan) Miller on January 6, 1934; John served in the United States Army Reserve during the Korean War; he and Rita were married in Danville on January 28, 1955; John received his Bachelor of Science in History from Eastern Illinois University and his Master of Science in Educational Administration from Illinois State University; and

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WHEREAS, John Dowling started teaching and coaching in Armstrong in 1955; he then continued at Crescent-Iroquois High School from 1959 to 1963; in 1963, he joined the Watseka High School teaching staff, where he also served as principal for 12 years, ending in 1984; he then became the grade school principal at both Wanda Kendall and Nettie Davis elementary schools; he also served as acting superintendent for a short time; he was awarded Iroquois County Teacher of the Year in 1968; he was an active member of the IHSA Board of Directors, where he was a past-president; he was also a member of the

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1 Iroquois County Board and served as the Middleport Township
2 Supervisor; and

3 WHEREAS, Reta Dowling started teaching in Bismarck Grade
4 School, and later at Crescent City Grade School and Glenn
5 Raymond Junior High School; she graduated from Illinois State
6 University in 1969 with her Bachelor of Science in Education
7 and started in the art department at Watseka Community High
8 School that same year; she also co-owned and taught at the Pied
9 Piper and Building Blocks Preschool; she went on to teach 4-H
10 students for many years; and

11 WHEREAS, John Dowling served as an Iroquois County
12 Republican Precinct Committeeman and with the Ford-Iroquois
13 Board of Health, the Watseka Library Board, and the I-KAN Joint
14 Education Committee; and

15 WHEREAS, Reta Dowling served as president of the Iroquois
16 Memorial Hospital Auxiliary and was also a member of the boards
17 for the Iroquois Mental Health Association, the Watseka Bridge
18 Club, and the Iroquois County Republican Women; and

19 WHEREAS, John Dowling was awarded Watseka Area Citizen of
20 the Year in 1989; he was a frequent volunteer at Iroquois
21 Memorial Hospital and helped organize the annual hospice brunch
22 for many years; he was also awarded the Lifetime Achievement

1 Award from the Watseka community; he was a member of the
2 Illinois Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame; and

3 WHEREAS, John Dowling enjoyed history and was a lifelong
4 St. Louis Cardinals baseball fan; he had a love for baseball,
5 starting with being a batboy for the Dodgers minor league team
6 in Danville; he authored a book on the history of the Three-I
7 League, which is in the library of the Baseball Hall of Fame in
8 Cooperstown, New York; talking baseball and being an advocate
9 for Iroquois County and Watseka were some of his greatest
10 passions; and

11 WHEREAS, Reta Dowling enjoyed ceramics and was a
12 watercolorist; she was a former Iroquois County 4-H judge and
13 was a blue ribbon winner for her angel food cakes; she was
14 always taking on a new project, whether it was framing pictures
15 for friends, making pies for the Gooseberry Festival, or
16 immersing herself in her grandchildren's latest school
17 project; she was the official costume maker for all of her
18 children and grandchildren, and inspired them all to bring
19 creativity into their lives; Reta also sang with the Iroquois
20 County Cantata Choir; and

21 WHEREAS, John and Reta Dowling were active members of the
22 First Presbyterian Church in Watseka; they traveled all over
23 the world, usually with friends and family and always made new

1 friends along the way; St. Louis Cardinals spring training was
2 one of their favorite places; they were both avid readers and
3 loved spending time with their grandchildren, playing games
4 with them and attending their activities; and

5 WHEREAS, John Dowling was preceded in death by his parents;
6 Reta Dowling was preceded in death by her parents and her
7 brother, Fred Miller; and

8 WHEREAS, John and Reta Dowling are survived by their sons,
9 Michael (Kathy) Dowling, David (Kathy) Dowling, and Robert
10 (Kary) Dowling; their grandchildren, William Dowling, Laura
11 Dowling, Chris Dowling, Elizabeth Dowling, Kelsey Dowling,
12 Jori Dowling, and Mason Dowling; and their nieces, Susan
13 (Miller) Bruner and Sonja Miller; therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH GENERAL
15 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
16 John R. and Reta A. Dowling, and extend our sincere condolences
17 to their family, friends, and all who knew and loved them; and
18 be it further

19 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
20 presented to the family of John and Reta Dowling as an
21 expression of our deepest sympathy.