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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated, was founded on December 4, 1906 by seven college men, respectfully known as the "Seven Jewels," on the campus of Cornell University in Ithaca, New York and became the first intercollegiate Greek-letter fraternity established by and for African Americans; and

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WHEREAS, The Seven Jewels of the Fraternity, Henry Arthur Callis, Charles Henry Chapman, Eugene Kinckle Jones, George Biddle Kelley, Nathaniel Allison Murray, Robert Harold Ogle, and Vertner Woodson Tandy, recognized the need for a strong bond of brotherhood among African descendants in this country and the need to help correct the educational, economic, political, and social injustices faced by African Americans and other people of color; and

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WHEREAS, Alpha Phi Alpha initially served as a study and support group for minority students who faced racial prejudice, both educationally and socially, at Cornell University; the Jewel Founders and early leaders of the Fraternity succeeded in laying a firm foundation for Alpha Phi Alpha's principles of scholarship, fellowship, good character, and the uplifting of humanity; and

1 WHEREAS, While stressing academic excellence among its
2 members since its founding, Alpha Phi Alpha has consistently
3 supplied its voice and vision to the struggle of African
4 Americans and people of color and to issues of civil rights
5 around the world; and

6 WHEREAS, The aims of Alpha Phi Alpha are manly deeds,
7 scholarship, and love for all mankind; and

8 WHEREAS, The mission of Alpha Phi Alpha is to develop
9 leaders, promote brotherhood and academic excellence, and
10 provide service and advocacy for communities, as exemplified
11 through its national programs which include "Go to High School,
12 Go to College," which focuses on the educational achievement of
13 students in elementary, secondary, and post-secondary schools
14 and has given thousands of dollars in scholarship funds to
15 deserving students, "Project Alpha," which teaches teenage
16 pregnancy prevention and sexually transmitted disease
17 prevention to young males, and its "A Voteless People is a
18 Hopeless People" campaign, a voter registration and education
19 program through which thousands of voters have been educated
20 and registered; the Fraternity also focuses on providing
21 service through its strategic partnerships with Big Brothers
22 Big Sisters, the Boy Scouts of America, the March of Dimes, the
23 American Heart/American Stroke Association, and the American
24 Cancer Society; and

1 WHEREAS, For over 112 years, Alpha Phi Alpha has played a
2 fundamental role in the positive development of the character
3 and education of more than 200,000 men around the world; and

4 WHEREAS, Alpha Phi Alpha has over 700 college and alumni
5 chapters in the United States of America, Africa, Asia, the
6 Caribbean, and Europe; this total includes 141 chapters in the
7 Midwestern Region, including 32 in Illinois; Alpha Phi Alpha's
8 presence started in Illinois with the founding of the first
9 college chapter in Illinois, the Theta Chapter in 1910, and the
10 first alumni chapter, the Xi Lambda Chapter in 1924, both in
11 Chicago; and

12 WHEREAS, Members of Alpha Phi Alpha include many noteworthy
13 leaders in the areas of government, business, entertainment,
14 science, and higher education, including Dr. Martin Luther King
15 Jr., Thurgood Marshall, W.E.B. DuBois, John Hope Franklin, John
16 H. Johnson, Adam Clayton Powell, Andrew Young, Robert Smith,
17 and Cornel West; its membership also includes federal, State,
18 and local elected officials, including U.S. Representative
19 Danny K. Davis, former U.S. Senators Edward Brook and Roland
20 Burris, former State Senator Donne E. Trotter, former State
21 Representative Al Riley, former Cook County Board Presidents
22 John and Todd Stroger, and former Mayor of Chicago Eugene
23 Sawyer, among countless others who have long stood at the

1 forefront of the fight for civil and human rights and social
2 change for all Americans; and

3 WHEREAS, Several Alpha Phi Alpha members have served in the
4 Illinois General Assembly, including the following members of
5 the 101st General Assembly: Representatives Justin Slaughter,
6 Arthur Turner Jr., Emanuel "Chris" Welch, and Senator Elgie R.
7 Sims Jr, who also served as the 26th Vice President of the
8 Midwestern Region; and

9 WHEREAS, Alpha Phi Alpha continues to enrich the lives of
10 its members, who, in turn, provide service and advocacy for the
11 communities they serve; therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL
13 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we recognize the 2019
14 Alpha Phi Alpha Day held at the Illinois State Capitol and
15 welcome the members of Alpha Phi Alpha to the Capitol; and be
16 it further

17 RESOLVED, That we declare the date of May 8, 2019 as Alpha
18 Phi Alpha Day in the State of Illinois in honor of Alpha Phi
19 Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated and its continued impact on the
20 communities it serves.