



SR0552

LRB101 12957 MST 61793 r

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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 Margaret R. Blackshere, who passed away on July 6, 2019; and

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WHEREAS, Margaret Blackshere was raised in North Venice by her mother, Frances, and her aunt, Margie; and

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WHEREAS, Margaret Blackshere began her career in education as a kindergarten teacher in Madison after obtaining her master's degree in education at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville (SIUE); while attending SIUE, she served as a student trustee and then as a trustee appointed by the governor; she organized the movement that led to the Madison teachers joining the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT); and

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WHEREAS, Margaret Blackshere served at all levels of the labor movement from president of her local union (763) to statewide vice president of the IFT; in 1993, she was elected secretary-treasurer of the Illinois AFL-CIO; she was later elected as president and served two terms, the first woman to hold that position; she retired as president in February of 2007 and was given the status of president emeritus; and

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WHEREAS, Margaret Blackshere spent her life working to

1 elect worker-friendly legislators and state-wide officials;
2 her efforts were key to passing legislation dealing with
3 raising the minimum wage, expanding health care, enacting card
4 check for public employees, revamping unemployment insurance,
5 and revising workers' compensation laws; one of her greatest
6 contributions was her ability to bring competing interests
7 together; and

8 WHEREAS, Margaret Blackshere was involved in numerous
9 organizations fighting for equality and social justice; she
10 served with Illinois Women In Leadership and with a variety of
11 other boards, councils, and coalitions, including the United
12 Way of Illinois, the American Red Cross in Illinois, the
13 Chicago Council of Foreign Relations, the Unemployment
14 Insurance Advisory Board, the Alliance of Retired Americans
15 Executive Board, the Industrial Commission's Self Insure's
16 Advisory Board, the Chicago Metropolis 2020 Board, the Illinois
17 Women's Institute for Leadership, the Transportation for
18 Illinois Coalition, the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago
19 Advisory Council, and the Board of Trustees of the Global
20 Solidarity Center in Washington, D.C.; and

21 WHEREAS, Margaret Blackshere received numerous awards,
22 including the Labor Leader Award in 2000 from the Labor Council
23 for Latin American Advancement, the Israel Peace Medal in 2000
24 from the State of Israel, and the Protector of Working People

1 Award in 2002 from the Illinois State Crime Commission; she was
2 the guest of honor in 2003 for Chicago's St Patrick's Day
3 Parade; in 1998, she was inducted into the Illinois Labor
4 History Society's Union Hall of Honor; and

5 WHEREAS, Margaret Blackshere was a delegate to the
6 Democratic National Convention; she served as director of the
7 Illinois Democratic Coordinated Campaign in 1990 and 1992 and
8 was a member of the Democratic National Committee; and

9 WHEREAS, Margaret Blackshere was the loving mother of
10 Michael (Catherine) and Thomas (Zoe); the devoted grandmother
11 of Michael, Alex, Quinn, and Raquel Blackshere; and the fond
12 sister of Patricia (the late Leroy) Smith; therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL
14 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
15 Margaret R. Blackshere and extend our sincere condolences to
16 her family, friends, and all who knew and loved her; and be it
17 further

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