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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 Barbara Ballinger of Oak Park, who passed away on November 14, 2022 at the age of 97; and

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WHEREAS, Barbara Ballinger was born in Miami, Oklahoma in 1925; and

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WHEREAS, Barbara Ballinger started her library career with the Oklahoma City Public Library; and

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WHEREAS, Barbara Ballinger received a chauffeur's license to drive a bookmobile for the Topeka Public Library following her graduation from the University of Kansas; and

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WHEREAS, Barbara Ballinger earned her master's degree in library sciences at the University of Illinois and landed a job as the assistant director of Oak Park Public Library's Maze branch in 1958; and

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WHEREAS, Barbara Ballinger served as director of Oak Park's library system for 32 years before retiring in 1991; and

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WHEREAS, Barbara Ballinger led the Oak Park Public Library

1 during a period of tension and change, guided by the principle  
2 that public libraries are for all; and

3 WHEREAS, Barbara Ballinger was seen as an outstanding  
4 public servant who committed herself to literature, education,  
5 and Oak Park history; and

6 WHEREAS, Barbara Ballinger is credited with spearheading  
7 the collaboration between west suburban libraries in the 1970s  
8 and 1980s that would lay the groundwork for the SWAN network  
9 that exists today, allowing for the seamless distribution of  
10 materials throughout the suburbs; and

11 WHEREAS, Barbara Ballinger shared a July 21 birthday with  
12 Oak Park's famous native son, Ernest Hemingway, and was a  
13 dedicated volunteer with the Hemingway Foundation of Oak Park;  
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Barbara Ballinger helped create the Ernest  
16 Hemingway Foundation Archives, now housed at Oak Park's Main  
17 Library, which includes translations of many of his works as  
18 well as a check for \$100 that Hemingway intended to cover any  
19 outstanding fines; and

20 WHEREAS, Barbara Ballinger was a voracious reader and  
21 belonged to several local book clubs over the many decades

1 that she lived in Oak Park; she also talked many of those in  
2 her book clubs into reading books that they may have never been  
3 inclined to read normally; and

4 WHEREAS, Barbara Ballinger had a love for poetry,  
5 particularly by Gerard Manley Hopkins, and would joyfully open  
6 book club meetings with his poems; and

7 WHEREAS, Barbara Ballinger was also devoted to the Chicago  
8 Symphony Orchestra, as one of its longest subscribers, the  
9 Lyric Opera, particularly Wagner's monumental Ring Cycle, and  
10 the summer Ravinia Festival; and

11 WHEREAS, Barbara Ballinger was a recipient of the Senior  
12 Citizens' Center of Oak Park-River Forest's 2017 Ulyssean  
13 Award, which honors seniors committed to lifelong learning and  
14 who have made significant contributions to the community; and

15 WHEREAS, Barbara Ballinger was a vital fixture in the Oak  
16 Park community and played a leading role in the library, First  
17 United Church of Oak Park, the Doris Humphrey Society, and  
18 several other nonprofit organizations; and

19 WHEREAS, Barbara Ballinger will be missed by her family,  
20 many friends, and the Oak Park community who continue to  
21 benefit from the non-profit organizations she helped to

1 thrive; therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL  
3 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
4 Barbara Ballinger and extend our sincere condolences to her  
5 family, friends, and all who knew and loved her; and be it  
6 further

7 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
8 presented to the family of Barbara Ballinger as an expression  
9 of our deepest sympathy.