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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 Vater Mae Fite, who passed away on January 17, 2019; and

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WHEREAS, Vater Fite was born in Carthage, Texas to Marvin and Selma Connor on September 28, 1914; she was baptized at the age of 7 at Mt. Zion CME Church in Carthage; she attended Carthage Colored High School and was a lifelong student; she married J.C. Lilly; and

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WHEREAS, Vater Fite moved to California during World War II and worked as a welder of Navy battleship parts; she was proud of the distinction of being a female welder; she married Grady Fite; in 1950, upon the death of her second husband and the conclusion of WWII, she settled in Maywood to be near her children; and

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WHEREAS, Vater Fite worked for the State of Illinois as a senior caregiver and retired after 30 years of service; she returned to Texas to be a caregiver to her mother until her passing; she then returned to Oak Park to reside with her sister; in 2015, she moved to Plainfield, where she resided for several years with her son and daughter-in-law; she then moved to Alden of Waterford in Aurora; and

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1 WHEREAS, Vater Fite was a wonderful cook, loved music, and
2 had a wry sense of humor; she pursued many artistic endeavors,
3 including teaching herself to play the violin, sewing,
4 sculpting, wood carving, and painting; she attended courses at
5 the Art Institute of Chicago to master the art of watercolor
6 and oil painting; she participated in local art programs and
7 her work was recognized in the Oak Leaves newspaper; she was a
8 Featured Artist at the New Oak Park Public Library and was an
9 active member of the Oak Park Arms senior group and the Oak
10 Park Arts Council; and

11 WHEREAS, Vater Fite was remembered on her 100th birthday by
12 the Governor of Illinois and President of the United States
13 Barack Obama; and

14 WHEREAS, Vater Fite was affectionately known as "Grand";
15 she was an avid reader and loved to travel; she was a lifelong
16 baseball fan and cheered on her favorite team, the Chicago
17 Cubs, as they won the World Series in 2016; she enjoyed family
18 gatherings filled with music, games, debates, and a good nip of
19 gin; she was present at every family milestone, vacation, and
20 holiday; and

21 WHEREAS, Vater Fite lived long enough to see her
22 great-great-grandchildren and to become matriarch of a large

1 extended family that includes Illinois State Representative
2 Camille Lilly and great-grandson Evan Turner, a basketball
3 phenom at St. Joseph High School in Westchester and who plays
4 in the NBA for the Portland Trail Blazers; and

5 WHEREAS, Vater Fite was preceded in death by her parents;
6 her husband, Grady; her siblings, Herese, Inez, and Leon; her
7 daughters, Vater Jo, Billie June, and Gloria Marvis; and her
8 grandson, Darius LeRoi Lilly; and

9 WHEREAS, Vater Fite is survived by her son, LeRoy (Barbara)
10 Lilly; her grandchildren, Jerome Goodman, Iris James, Camille
11 Lilly, Brian Lilly, Karen (Jasmyn) Lilly, Kevin Neal (Jackie),
12 and April Braggs (Vincent); her great-grandchildren, Richard,
13 Darius, Evan, Briana, VJ, Briaja, and Brian II; her
14 great-great-grandchildren, Richard II and Aubrey; her nieces,
15 Joy Bell and Melody Conners; and numerous great-nieces and
16 nephews; therefore, be it

17 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL
18 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
19 Vater Mae Fite and extend our sincere condolences to her
20 family, friends, and all who knew and loved her; and be it
21 further

22 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be

1 presented to the family of Vater Fite as an expression of our
2 deepest sympathy.