



SR0545

LRB101 12920 ALS 61755 r

1

SENATE RESOLUTION

2

WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of Kermit L. Harden Jr. of Urbana, who passed away on June 19, 2019; and

3

4

5

WHEREAS, Kermit Harden Jr. was born in Maquon to Hazel (Martin) and Kermit A. Harden Sr. on October 26, 1924; he graduated from Fairview High School and began undergraduate studies in mathematics at the University of Illinois, where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Education in 1945; he received his master's degree in education from Bradley University in 1952; he married Harriet Ann Harden on June 6, 1959; he earned his doctorate in education from the University of Illinois in 1972; and

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

WHEREAS, Kermit Harden Jr. was a decorated veteran of World War II; he served in the 94th Infantry Division and received four Battle Stars, Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland, and Central Europe; his company was captured by the Germans in October 1944, and he was held as a Prisoner of War for 45 days before being included in the first prisoner exchange of the war; he returned to active combat and received the Silver Star for Gallantry in Action in Germany, the Bronze Star at the Battle of the Bulge, and the Purple Heart in Northern France; for his service to the people of France, he was awarded the

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

1 Order of the Legion d'Honneur by the French Government; and

2 WHEREAS, Kermit Harden Jr. began his career in education as
3 a math teacher in Havana; he served as the assistant principal
4 of the American School in Paris, France before returning to
5 Illinois to become assistant superintendent and later
6 superintendent of Bethalto Community Schools; in 1968, he
7 became assistant superintendent of Urbana schools and later
8 served as superintendent from 1975 until 1983; after his
9 retirement, he served as interim superintendent for many
10 Central Illinois school districts and as a visiting professor
11 of education at the University of Illinois; during retirement,
12 he also worked as a licensed tax preparer and instructor for
13 H&R Block for 25 years; and

14 WHEREAS, Kermit Harden Jr. was a tireless community
15 volunteer; he was a faithful member of the First Presbyterian
16 Church of Urbana, where he served as a trustee, Deacon, Session
17 member, and Clerk of the Session; he was a two-time president
18 of the Rotary Club of Bethalto and Urbana and served the Urbana
19 club as secretary for 23 years; in 2013, he was named Rotarian
20 of the Year; a generous contributor of time and money to worthy
21 causes, he served as a board member for the Prairie Lands Boy
22 Scout Council, the United Way, the Champaign County Board, and
23 the March of Dimes; he was president of the Reading Group for
24 nine years and chairman of the local Red Cross; he served as

1 president, secretary, and treasurer of the Urbana Free Library
2 Board and was co-chairman, along with his wife, in the capital
3 campaign to raise funds for the library's expansion in 2005;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, Kermit Harden Jr. was a loyal Illini fan and a
6 5-year season ticket holder for both basketball and football;
7 he served as president of the University of Illinois Alumni
8 Board; he was a past president of the College of Education
9 Alumni Board and a member of the President's Council of the U
10 of I Foundation; he was a volunteer track and field official
11 for 20 years and a longtime member of the Illini Rebounders and
12 Quarterback Clubs; he was a supporter of the Krannert Center
13 for the Performing Arts through the Symphony Guild and enjoyed
14 their many operatic and theatrical productions; he was a
15 gourmet cook and an avid vegetable gardener and enjoyed gifting
16 his produce to friends and family; in his spare time, he
17 enjoyed traveling to Europe, attending Illini post-season
18 sporting events, and spoiling his grandchildren; he will be
19 remembered for the strength of his character and his great
20 sense of humor; and

21 WHEREAS, Kermit Harden Jr. was preceded in death by his
22 siblings, Eldon (Dorothy) Harden, Gordon Harden, Norma Mae
23 Harden, and Margaret Ann (George) Van Houten; and his
24 grandchild, Paige Elizabeth Lunsford; and

1 WHEREAS, Kermit Harden Jr. is survived by his wife of 60
2 years, Harriett Ann Steinrauf Harden; his son, J. Andrew
3 (Jackie) Harden; his daughter, Elizabeth Anne (Terry)
4 Lunsford; and his five grandchildren; therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL
6 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
7 Kermit L. Harden Jr. and extend our sincere condolences to his
8 family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it
9 further

10 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
11 presented to the family of Kermit Harden Jr. as an expression
12 of our deepest sympathy.