



SR1072

LRB101 21046 LAW 71294 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 Justice Charles E. Freeman of Chicago, who passed away on March 2, 2020; and

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WHEREAS, Justice Freeman was born in Richmond, Virginia on December 12, 1933; he was the descendent of slaves who adopted the "Freeman" surname to reflect their freedom, which was gained before the Civil War; he earned his bachelor's degree from Virginia Union University in 1954 and his Juris Doctor from the John Marshall Law School in 1962; and

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WHEREAS, Justice Freeman had a long and distinguished professional and public career in Illinois; he served as an assistant attorney general, an assistant state's attorney, and an attorney for the Board of Election Commissioners; he also engaged in the general practice of law from 1962 to 1976; and

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WHEREAS, Justice Freeman was appointed as an arbitrator to the Illinois Industrial Commission in January 1965 and served in that capacity until September 1973; he served on the Illinois Commerce Commission from September 1973 to December 1976; and

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WHEREAS, Justice Freeman was elected to the Cook County

1 Circuit Court in 1976 and served for 10 years, winning two
2 elections in the process; while a circuit court judge, he
3 became the first African American to swear in a Chicago mayor,
4 his good friend Harold Washington; he was elected to the
5 appellate court in 1986; and

6 WHEREAS, Justice Freeman was elected to the Illinois
7 Supreme Court on November 6, 1990, becoming the first African
8 American to serve on the highest court in Illinois; and

9 WHEREAS, Justice Freeman was selected as chief justice of
10 the Illinois Supreme Court on May 12, 1997, becoming the first
11 African American to serve in that role; he served until January
12 1, 2000; and

13 WHEREAS, Justice Freeman retired on June 14, 2018, bringing
14 to a close a legal career that spanned nearly six decades; he
15 was the fifth-longest serving justice in Illinois Supreme Court
16 history at 27 years, six months; 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 Justice Charles E. Freeman and extend our sincere condolences
20 to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be
21 it further

1 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
2 presented to the family of Justice Charles Freeman as an
3 expression of our deepest sympathy.