



SR1349

LRB101 22142 LAW 73166 r

1 SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Governor James "Big Jim" Thompson was born in Oak
3 Park to J. Robert and Agnes Thompson on May 8, 1936; and

4 WHEREAS, Governor Thompson attended Samuel Morse Grade
5 School, North Park Academy, the University of Illinois at
6 Chicago, and Northwestern University; he earned a juris
7 doctorate from Northeastern University in 1959; and

8 WHEREAS, Governor Thompson married Jayne Carr, also of Oak
9 Park, and they had a daughter, Samantha; and

10 WHEREAS, Governor Thompson was dedicated to public service
11 and served as prosecutor in Cook County from 1959 to 1964; he
12 then took a position as an associate professor at Northwestern
13 University Law School and co-authored several textbooks; he
14 accepted a position in the Illinois Attorney General's Office
15 in 1969, serving as chief of the Department of Law Enforcement
16 and Public Protection; he became a first assistant U.S.
17 attorney in 1970; he was appointed a U.S. attorney in 1971, a
18 position he used to address public corruption and voter fraud
19 in Cook County; and

20 WHEREAS, Governor Thompson successfully ran on the
21 Republican ticket for governor of Illinois in 1976 and was

1 subsequently re-elected in 1978, 1982, and 1986, becoming the
2 longest-serving governor in Illinois history, serving from
3 1977 to 1991; and

4 WHEREAS, Governor Thompson is credited for his tireless
5 efforts to benefit the State of Illinois; he is particularly
6 remembered for navigating the State through the economic
7 malaise of the 1970s to the economic prosperity of the 1980s,
8 retaining the Chicago White Sox in Illinois, creating the
9 Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, and constructing the
10 Chicago office building, the James R. Thompson Center, that now
11 bears his name; and

12 WHEREAS, After his retirement from public office, Governor
13 Thompson joined the Chicago law firm Winston & Strawn and
14 continued to serve the public on a number of boards and
15 commissions, most notably the 9-11 Commission; and

16 WHEREAS, Governor Thompson passed away August 14, 2020, at
17 the age of 84 at the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab in Chicago; his
18 death elicited praise for and commemoration of his service to
19 the State of Illinois from Republicans and Democrats alike; and

20 WHEREAS, Due to the COVID-19 public health crisis, his
21 family has chosen not to hold a public funeral or memorial
22 service at this time; therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL
2 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we declare January 10,
3 2021 as Governor James "Big Jim" Thompson Day in the State of
4 Illinois in recognition of the forty-fourth anniversary of his
5 inauguration as governor and to recognize Governor Thompson's
6 tireless leadership in the development and promotion of the
7 State of Illinois; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
9 presented to Jayne Thompson as a symbol of our respect and
10 esteem.