



HR0429

LRB102 19710 LAW 28484 r

1

HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of the
4 Honorable Raymond Alan Bolden of Joliet, who passed away on
5 August 17, 2021; and

6 WHEREAS, Judge Bolden was born in Chicago to Catherine
7 Hester Ray and Adrian Bolden on December 17, 1933; he moved to
8 Joliet as a teen and lived with his maternal grandfather,
9 Edward "Papa" Ray; he graduated from Joliet Township High
10 School in 1951 and Joliet Junior College in 1953; he served in
11 the U.S. Air Force; he married Kathleen "Kat" Whitfield in
12 1956, and they raised three children together before she
13 preceded him in death after 38 years of marriage; he earned his
14 law degree from the University of Illinois in 1961; he married
15 Deborah Hickman McLurkin in 1998; and

16 WHEREAS, Alongside his wife Kat, Judge Bolden was active
17 in the Civil Rights Movement, and they battled ceaselessly
18 against racial discrimination in housing, employment, and
19 education; they partnered on numerous community projects,
20 including the Warren-Sharpe Community Center, which they
21 co-founded in 1990; he served as president of the Joliet
22 Branch of the NAACP during the 1960s, and he later received the
23 organization's Lifetime Achievement Award; and

1 WHEREAS, Judge Bolden was a trailblazer for over 40 years;
2 he served as the first Black assistant state's attorney of
3 Will County; he became a renowned criminal defense lawyer; he
4 was a brilliant legal strategist and a powerful speaker who
5 believed that the law could be a great force for social justice
6 and equality; he was appointed the Will County Associate Judge
7 in 1986, a post he held with distinction for 14 years;
8 following his retirement from the bench, he returned to
9 practicing law; he was later reappointed as a circuit court
10 judge for a one-year term; and

11 WHEREAS, Judge Bolden was a lifelong member of Sacred
12 Heart Parish, where he served in various ministries; alongside
13 his wife Deborah, he continued to serve the community through
14 the National Hook-Up of Black Women and the Black Bar
15 Association of Will County, which he co-founded in 2007; he
16 was also a committed White Sox fan; and

17 WHEREAS, Judge Bolden was a warrior for justice known for
18 always standing on the side of equality and championing for
19 the weak and oppressed; the practice of law was his passion and
20 the fulfillment of his dream, but his heart belonged to his
21 family; his legacy will live on in those he loved and inspired;
22 and

1 WHEREAS, Judge Bolden was preceded in death by his
2 grandfather; his parents; his brothers, Frank, Joseph, and
3 Edward; and his sister, June Bolden; and

4 WHEREAS, Judge Bolden is survived by his wife of 23 years,
5 Deborah Bolden; his children, Kathryn "Kay" Bolden, Alan Scott
6 (Erika) Bolden, and Joseph "Joe" Bolden; his grandchildren,
7 Shayla Grayson, Joshua Bolden, Jeremy (Katie) Bolden, Karyn
8 (Dennis) Omogbeme, McKay Bolden, McKenzie Bolden, and Cameron
9 Bolden; his great-grandchildren, Ashanti Govan, Kyla Bolden,
10 Jacari Bolden, Isaiah Bolden, Harlie Jade Bolden, and Cree
11 Bolden; his bonus children, Justin McLurkin and Kimberly
12 (David) Wright; his bonus grandchildren, Cole Hughes, Elliott
13 Wright, Emerson Wright, Caitlyn McLurkin, and Sydney McLurkin;
14 his sister-in-law, Betty (Billy) Byrd, and the entire Byrd
15 family; his niece, Linda (Eric) Washington; his nephew, Eugene
16 "Geno" Bolden; his special cousins, Barbara "Penni" Williams
17 and Sherri Tramel; and his countless friends and relatives;
18 therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
20 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
21 we mourn the passing of the Honorable Raymond Alan Bolden and
22 extend our sincere condolences to his family, friends, and all
23 who knew and loved him; and be it further

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