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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of Timuel
4 Dixon Black Jr. of Chicago, who passed away on October 13,
5 2021; and

6 WHEREAS, Timuel Black was born to Mattie and Timuel Black
7 in Birmingham, Alabama on December 7, 1918; his family moved
8 to Chicago in August 1919; he grew up in Bronzeville during the
9 first wave of the Great Migration; he attended Burke
10 Elementary School; he graduated from DuSable High School in
11 1935; he served in the 308th Quartermaster Railhead Company of
12 the U.S. Army during World War II, and he earned four Battle
13 Stars and the French Croix de Guerre for his service; he
14 married Norisea Cummings in 1946, and they had two children,
15 Ermetra Black-Thomas and Timuel Kerrigan Black, before
16 divorcing; he obtained his bachelor's degree in Sociology from
17 Roosevelt University in 1952; he earned his master's degree in
18 Sociology and History from the University of Chicago in 1954;
19 he married his third wife Zenobia Johnson-Black in 1981; and

20 WHEREAS, Timuel Black was a revered activist, educator,
21 and historian; his first experience with labor organizing
22 occurred when he and his coworkers sought better wages by
23 forming a chapter of the Retail Clerks Union; he walked his

1 first picket line in 1931; he helped establish the Congress of
2 Racial Equality (CORE) in 1942 and the United Packinghouse
3 Workers of America (UPWA) in 1943; he was among a group from
4 Hyde Park's First Unitarian Church to invite Dr. Martin Luther
5 King Jr. to his first major Chicago speech at the Rockefeller
6 Memorial Chapel of the University of Chicago in 1956, where he
7 worked closely with Dr. King and became a trusted adviser
8 during the Civil Rights Movement; he helped organize the
9 Rainbow Beach "wade-ins" in 1960 that succeeded in integrating
10 that public beach a year later; he served as president of the
11 Chicago chapter of the Negro American Labor Council and
12 spearheaded Chicagoans' participation in the Southern
13 Christian Leadership Council's '63 March on Washington for
14 Jobs and Freedom, leading two "Freedom Trains" of 3,000
15 Chicagoans to D.C.; he was heavily involved in the Chicago
16 Freedom Movement; he was influential in the historic one-day
17 Chicago Public Schools boycott by approximately 250,000
18 students to call attention to segregation in Chicago schools
19 on October 22, 1963; and

20 WHEREAS, Timuel Black gained national attention for
21 coining the phrase "plantation politics" while confronting
22 Mayor Richard J. Daley's political machine when he
23 unsuccessfully ran for Fourth Ward alderman in 1963; he
24 co-chaired the People's Movement for Voter Registration and
25 Education in 1982, resulting in the registration of more than

1 250,000 voters to get Harold Washington to run against Jane
2 Byrne for Chicago mayor; he served as an adviser in the
3 campaigns of many of Chicago's Black elected officials,
4 including Carol Moseley Braun, who was elected as the first
5 African American woman to serve in the U.S. Senate in 1992; he
6 later served as counsel to then-Senator Barack Obama when he
7 ran for president in 2008, having become friends when Obama
8 was a young community organizer in the early 1980s; and

9 WHEREAS, Timuel Black worked as a social worker and a
10 history teacher at several high schools in Gary, Indiana and
11 Chicago, including DuSable, Farragut, and Hyde Park, where he
12 fought segregation and discrimination within the school
13 system; he helped establish the Teachers Committee for Quality
14 Education; he served as a professor of Sociology and
15 Anthropology at the City Colleges of Chicago, becoming dean of
16 Wright College in 1969; he was promoted to vice president of
17 Academic Affairs at Olive Harvey College in 1972; he served as
18 head of Communications system wide from 1973 to 1979; he then
19 taught Cultural Anthropology at Loop College until his
20 retirement in 1989; and

21 WHEREAS, Timuel Black became lead plaintiff in the ACLU's
22 Black vs. McGuffage lawsuit, which accused Illinois' voting
23 system of discriminating against minorities, in the wake of
24 the 2000 presidential election; his lawsuit led to the ban of

1 punch card ballots and a uniform voting system in Illinois;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, Timuel Black donated a collection of more than
4 250 boxes of personal photographs, correspondence,
5 manuscripts, speeches, audiovisuals, clippings, programs, and
6 other memorabilia to the Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection
7 of Afro-American History and Literature at the Carter G.
8 Woodson Regional Library in Chicago; his collection was
9 unveiled as the Timuel D. Black Jr. Archive in 2012; and

10 WHEREAS, Timuel Black was a prolific author; he wrote two
11 seminal volumes of oral histories on the subject, which were
12 Bridges of Memory: Chicago's First Wave of Great Migration,
13 published in 2003, and Bridges of Memory: Chicago's Second
14 Generation of Black Migration, published in 2007; his memoir
15 Sacred Ground: The Chicago Streets of Timuel Black was
16 released on January 15, 2019; and

17 WHEREAS, Timuel Black remained active in progressive
18 politics and also conducted tours of Bronzeville for the
19 University of Chicago well into his late 90s; he joined the
20 Community Advisory Board led by the University, working to
21 bring the Barack Obama Presidential Library to Jackson Park;
22 he made the Chicago Sun-Times' list of the 200 most prominent
23 Illinoisans in the State's 200-year history in 2018; and

1 WHEREAS, Timuel Black left his mark on the City of
2 Chicago, on his friends who knew him, and on those who knew of
3 him; his legacy will inspire others to make this world a better
4 place just as he strove to do; therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
6 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
7 we mourn the passing of Timuel Dixon Black Jr. and extend our
8 sincere condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew
9 and loved him; and be it further

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