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LRB102 26520 LAW 37086 r

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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 longtime
4 LGBTQ+ activist and journalist Maxsonn "Max" Smith, who passed
5 away on February 9, 2022; and

6 WHEREAS, Max Smith was born in Hickory, North Carolina on
7 February 9, 2022; he graduated from Jefferson City High School
8 in Jefferson City, Missouri; he received his bachelor's degree
9 in Communication Arts from Michigan State University in 1976,
10 where he served as president of Michigan State Gay Liberation,
11 now known as the Alliance of Queer and Ally Students, during
12 his junior and senior years; and

13 WHEREAS, Max Smith moved to Chicago as an out gay man
14 shortly after graduating college, where he pursued LGBTQ+
15 activism through journalism; he began working in the Real
16 Estate Advertising Sales Department of the Chicago Tribune and
17 later at Time-Life; he was also a writer for the Windy City
18 Times, Identity, BLK and Blacklight magazines, the
19 discontinued BLACKlines, and the Habari Daftari National
20 Coalition of Black Lesbian and Gays (NCBLG) newsletter; his
21 writing was also featured in the book anthology titled In the
22 Life; he edited the Black men's LGBTQ+ relationships book
23 titled Staying Power! and self-published the book African

1 Americans 3rd Rail: Same-Gender-Loving, which conveyed the
2 intersection of racism and homophobia; and

3 WHEREAS, Max Smith held leadership roles in several LGBTQ+
4 activist organizations, including the Chicago chapter of the
5 NCBLG as founder and the Illinois Gay and Lesbian Rights Task
6 Force as treasurer; he also served as an organizer of the
7 United Faith Affinitas Church and a founding member of the
8 Lighthouse Church of Chicago; he was a member of Adodi
9 Chicago, the Black Bible Study Group, BROTHERRS, the Church of
10 the Open Door, the Committee to Increase Black Lesbian/Gay
11 Awareness, the Good Shepherd Parish Metropolitan Community
12 Church, the National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum,
13 and the Third World Gay and Lesbian Christian Conference; he
14 also participated in the concurrent Third World Lesbian and
15 Gay Conference at Howard University in Washington, D.C. and
16 the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights in
17 October 1979; and

18 WHEREAS, Max Smith was inducted into the Chicago LGBT Hall
19 of Fame in 1991; he also challenged Operation PUSH and the
20 NAACP to be LGBTQ+ friendly in their actions and statements;
21 throughout his life, he made an effort to educate people on
22 race, faith, and sexual identity; and

23 WHEREAS, Max Smith was known for being caring, selfless,

1 and welcoming; he was a big brother and friend to many; his
2 home was known as a place of refuge that he built for Black
3 LGBTQ+ men in Chicago experiencing homelessness; he sheltered
4 dozens of Black LGBTQ+ men over the years, including Black
5 LGBTQ+ immigrants seeking asylum in the U.S.; through his
6 help, many of the people he sheltered are living fulfilling
7 lives with homes of their own today; and

8 WHEREAS, Max Smith is survived by his sister, Joyce Hooks;
9 his cousin, Phyllis Razeeq; and countless chosen family
10 members and friends; therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
12 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
13 we mourn the passing of Maxsonn "Max" Smith and extend our
14 sincere condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew
15 and loved him; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
17 presented to the family of Max Smith as an expression of our
18 deepest sympathy.