



HR0832

LRB102 27206 LAW 38827 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of Eugene N. Parker, Ph.D. of Chicago, who passed away on March 15, 2022; and

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WHEREAS, Dr. Parker was born to Glenn Parker and Helen (MacNair) Parker in Houghton, Michigan on June 10, 1927; he received his Bachelor of Science in Physics from Michigan State University in 1948; he earned his Ph.D. from the California Institute of Technology in 1951; and

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WHEREAS, Dr. Parker was an acclaimed astrophysicist and professor emeritus of the University of Chicago; he began his academic career as an instructor and assistant professor at the University of Utah from 1951 to 1955; he then accepted a position at the University of Chicago in 1955, where he remained for the rest of his career; he retired in 1995 and continued to publish articles and books in retirement; and

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WHEREAS, Early in his tenure at the University of Chicago, Dr. Parker predicted the existence of solar wind, a continuous outpouring of charged particles traveling from the sun at a million miles per hour; his initial research was a collaboration with John A. Simpson about cosmic rays, which

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1 led him into developing a mathematical theory that predicted
2 solar wind; he published his prediction in 1958 despite almost
3 no one believing him, including the reviewers of his paper and
4 the editor of The Astrophysical Journal that published it; he
5 was vindicated four years later when, exactly as he predicted,
6 the NASA spacecraft Mariner 2 observed energetic particles
7 streaming through interplanetary space while en route to
8 Venus; he continued to revolutionize the field throughout his
9 career, advancing ideas that addressed the fundamental
10 questions about the workings of the sun and stars throughout
11 the universe; due to his groundbreaking work, he has been
12 credited by many for bringing the field of heliophysics into
13 existence; and

14 WHEREAS, Dr. Parker became the first living person to have
15 a NASA spacecraft named in his honor; he was the namesake of
16 the Parker Solar Probe that launched in 2018, which was NASA's
17 first mission to fly a spacecraft directly into the sun's
18 atmosphere, serving as a tribute to his 1958 work that
19 developed the concept of solar wind; and

20 WHEREAS, Dr. Parker received numerous accolades for his
21 work, including being elected into the National Academy of
22 Sciences in 1967, receiving the National Medal of Science in
23 1989, and being awarded the Crafoord Prize in Astronomy by the
24 Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in 2020; and

1 WHEREAS, Dr. Parker was a visionary and one of the great
2 scientific minds and leaders of the era; and

3 WHEREAS, Dr. Parker is survived by his wife of 67 years,
4 Niesje Parker; his brother, Phillip; his son, Eric Glenn
5 (Susan) Parker; his daughter, Joyce Marie (Ed) Parker; his
6 grandchildren, Owen (Allison) Loh, Miles (Michelle) Loh, and
7 Nolan (fiancée, Hillary Wang) Loh; and his
8 great-grandchildren, Lena and Elliott; therefore, be it

9 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
10 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
11 we mourn the passing of Eugene N. Parker, Ph.D. and extend our
12 sincere condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew
13 and loved him; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
15 presented to the family of Dr. Parker as an expression of our
16 deepest sympathy.