



HR0842

LRB102 27367 ECR 39156 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 Billie Jean Paige of Chicago, who passed away on April 10, 2022; and

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WHEREAS, Billie Paige was born to Enos and Ora Bond in Chicago on June 26, 1937; she received her formal education at an all-girls boarding school in Wisconsin, where she was an exceptional student, a stand-out basketball player, and a participant in musicals and stage plays; after high school, she attended Loyola University, the University of Chicago, and Roosevelt University; she graduated college at age 19, having developed an interest in politics and government; in addition to excelling as a student, she was professionally trained as a vocalist and pianist; she married George Howard Paige on February 16, 1957; and

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WHEREAS, Billie Paige first worked as a secretary at the University of Chicago's graduate school; she then worked for Head Start and joined the Kuumba Workshop in the 1970s; in 1973, she was recruited into Illinois state government and worked as a Coordinator of Paraprofessional Training; in 1975, she became the Commissioner of the Illinois Department of Labor's Bureau of Employment Security's Division of Unemployment Insurance; she was the first African American

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1 woman to head an unemployment program in the United States; in  
2 late 1975, she became the Assistant Director of the Illinois  
3 Department of Registration and Education and was the  
4 second-ranking statutory official for the department; in 1980,  
5 she earned the position of Director of Government Affairs for  
6 the Illinois Hospital Association; in 1983, she became a  
7 legislative consultant with Shea, Rogal and Associates and  
8 made history as the first full-time African American female  
9 lobbyist in Illinois; in 1992, she was named President of  
10 Shea, Paige, and Rogal, Incorporated and became a partner in  
11 the firm; in 1984, she served as President and Chief Executive  
12 Officer of Continental Testing Services, Incorporated; and

13 WHEREAS, Billie Paige became a member of Saint Ailbe  
14 Catholic Church (Saint Katharine Drexel Parish) in Chicago in  
15 the 1960s; she served as the vocalist and pianist at the  
16 parish's Saturday evening mass; she was ultimately named the  
17 Assistant to the Director of Music and sang in the choir at all  
18 three of the weekend masses in addition to the holiday masses;  
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20 WHEREAS, Billie Paige was a founding member of the  
21 Illinois Women's Institute for Leadership (IWIL) Training  
22 Academy; and

23 WHEREAS, Billie Paige was a lifelong lover of owls and

1 collected many pieces of jewelry, paintings, and figurines  
2 bearing owl images; she enjoyed music and collected music  
3 boxes and visual art pieces depicting musical notes; she was  
4 also an ardent fan of the Star Wars movies and was known for  
5 her delicious greens and chili recipe and for her annual pool  
6 party; included in her collectibles were items that featured  
7 images of West Highland White Terriers, of which she had six  
8 during her lifetime; and

9 WHEREAS, Billie Paige was preceded in death by her son,  
10 Stephen; and

11 WHEREAS, Billie Paige is survived by her loving husband,  
12 George; her son, Gary (Apryl); her daughter-in-law, Jacinta;  
13 her granddaughter, Daria; and a host of beloved relatives and  
14 cherished friends; therefore, be it

15 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
16 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
17 we mourn the passing of Billie Jean Paige and extend our  
18 sincere condolences to her family, friends, and all who knew  
19 and loved her; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
21 presented to the family of Billie Paige as an expression of our  
22 deepest sympathy.