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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of C. Dirk McGinnis, who passed away on November 23, 2021; and

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WHEREAS, Dirk McGinnis was born in Winnetka to Clifford "Doc" and Francis (Jackson) McGinnis on May 4, 1936; he graduated from Peoria High School in 1954 and attended Kansas State University; he graduated from Bradley University with a degree in accounting, where he was a member of the Sigma Nu fraternity and cultivated a love of singing; he married Martha E. Pfeffinger at First Federated Church in Peoria on October 24, 1958; and

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WHEREAS, Dirk McGinnis worked as an accountant and then as a Peoria realtor with Commercial National Realty; he joined the Downtown Rotary Club and eventually started Dirk McGinnis Realty, where he developed a subdivision in Mossville and Brimfield; he then bought a Century 21 franchise; in the 70s, he turned to acting and singing in Chicago and was soon appearing in commercials for many businesses, including McDonald's, Lipton Tea, and Amway; he was featured in industrial films and had a long run as Andrew McClaren in the Lincolnshire production of Brigadoon; he returned to Peoria and started teaching; he taught computers at Woodruff High

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1 School and also taught accounting, bookkeeping, and real  
2 estate at Illinois Central College in the evenings; and

3 WHEREAS, Dirk McGinnis ran for a Peoria County Board seat  
4 to represent his neighborhood, Columbia Terrace North, which  
5 began a long career in local politics; he was also elected the  
6 Peoria County Recorder of Deeds for 12 years and attended  
7 state conferences, where he was known as the Singing Recorder;  
8 and

9 WHEREAS, Dirk McGinnis was a long-time member of the  
10 Illinois Valley Yacht and Canoe Club; in college, he had been  
11 taught to sail and soon got a small sailboat of his own; he  
12 sailed various boats on Upper Peoria Lake for decades and  
13 taught sailing to adults through the Peoria Park District;  
14 being on the water was his greatest joy, and he got his  
15 captain's license and skippered charter sailing cruises to the  
16 U.S. and British Virgin Islands; he also crewed on a sailboat  
17 in The Mac, the dangerous Chicago to Mackinac Race; he helped  
18 friends do long sails from the Caribbean to Florida and up the  
19 New England coast; he was a great swimmer from an early time  
20 and encouraged his children to swim as well; he was well known  
21 through the swimming community for his personal and  
22 enthusiastic swim meet announcing; and

23 WHEREAS, Dirk McGinnis and his wife retired for a time on

1 their boat with the intent to circumnavigate the eastern half  
2 of the U.S.; they left on the Illinois River and went down the  
3 Mississippi River to the Gulf and around to Florida; they  
4 stayed several years in the Bahamas, living aboard their  
5 sailboat; they eventually retired in North Fort Myers,  
6 Florida; and

7 WHEREAS, Dirk McGinnis was known to sing at many different  
8 churches in town; he directed choirs at First Presbyterian  
9 Church, First United Congregational Church, and Northminster  
10 Presbyterian Church and even named his first boat the  
11 Hallelujah; he was often a guest soloist, and he sang at too  
12 many weddings to count; he was a life-long member of First  
13 Federated Church from his boyhood to participating in the  
14 choir into his 70s; he was recruited by his voice teacher to  
15 help fill out the canon at Temple Anshai Emeth, singing in  
16 Hebrew; he performed there for years on Friday nights, at  
17 weddings at many churches on Saturdays, and in church choir on  
18 Sundays; he said he was a "Community Christian" when asked  
19 about his faith; and

20 WHEREAS, Dirk McGinnis performed with numerous  
21 organizations, most notably the Peoria Symphony Orchestra, the  
22 Peoria Civic Opera Company, the Peoria Municipal Band, the  
23 Orpheus Club, and the Morton Civic Chorus; he also served on  
24 the board of directors for the Central Illinois Memorial

1 Kidney Fund; he was able to be a major fundraiser with his  
2 musical revues from 1990 to 1999 and raised over \$100,000 for  
3 the local Alzheimer's Association; for many holidays, he led  
4 the Peoria Courthouse Plaza singalong; he led his McGinnis  
5 Family Singers at the Yule Like Peoria celebration for years  
6 as they performed at different downtown venues; and

7 WHEREAS, Dirk McGinnis co-organized a folk group composed  
8 of local high school students called The Young Folk, and they  
9 primarily performed every year at the Heart of Illinois Fair  
10 in the afternoons but were asked to perform at other locales,  
11 including an event in Peoria where President-elect Richard  
12 Nixon appeared; he received a personal thank you note from  
13 Nixon after the rally; and

14 WHEREAS, Dirk McGinnis had a long running Irish revue with  
15 good friends, Denise Adams, Helen Wade, Tom Joyce, and others  
16 over the years; they performed sold out evenings at Pekin's  
17 Chateau restaurant; with his love of Irish music, beer, and  
18 culture, he briefly owned the Limerick Pub on the Illinois  
19 River; and

20 WHEREAS, Dirk McGinnis performed at the Corn Stock  
21 Theatre, the second generation of four McGinnises to perform  
22 there; he was seen on stage in Brigadoon, 1776, South Pacific,  
23 Fanny, Finian's Rainbow, Kismet, and The Man Who Came To

1 Dinner; he music directed Flower Drum Song, Guys and Dolls,  
2 Little Shop of Horrors, and Chicago; he served on the board of  
3 directors for the Corn Stock Theatre and was seen in a Corn  
4 Stock ad campaign; he strongly believed in the importance of  
5 community theater and had season tickets there and at the  
6 Peoria Symphony Orchestra and the Heartland Festival  
7 Orchestra; and

8 WHEREAS, Dirk McGinnis was asked to sing the National  
9 Anthem for many years at the Illinois State Fair, the Peoria  
10 Motorcycle Club races, Bradley basketball games, Rivermen  
11 Hockey games, Peoria Chiefs games, and many other events; and

12 WHEREAS, Dirk McGinnis and his wife moved to Lutheran  
13 Hillside Village after a serious illness; he enjoyed his years  
14 there participating in the many activities, which still  
15 included entertaining; he strolled the hallways on Christmas  
16 Eve singing carols to the shut-in residents; and

17 WHEREAS, Dirk McGinnis was preceded in death by his wife  
18 of 60 years, Martha; his parents; his brother, Alex; and his  
19 son, Arran McGinnis; and

20 WHEREAS, Dirk McGinnis is survived by his daughters, Roz  
21 (Ron) Helms, Polly (Mike) McNally, and Meghan (Arnel) Tejero;  
22 his grandchildren, Keegan McNally, Colleen McNally, Lilianna

1 Tejero, Shannon Helms, Benjamin Helms, Samantha Helms, Bevin  
2 Helms, and Meredith Rager; his brother, Michael McGinnis; his  
3 sister-in-law, Mary Lou McGinnis; and numerous nieces and  
4 nephews and great-nieces and great-nephews; therefore, be it

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

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