



SR0832

LRB102 26248 ECR 36113 r

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois State Senate are
3 saddened to learn of the death of Ramona "Mona" C. McNeese of
4 Oak Park, Illinois, who passed away on January 7, 2022 at the
5 age of 88; and

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WHEREAS, Mona McNeese was born in Toledo, Ohio on July 12,
7 1933, surviving through the depths of the Great Depression;
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WHEREAS, Mona McNeese graduated from the University of
11 Toledo in 1955, shortly before taking the first flight of her
12 life to Japan to marry her college boyfriend and work as a
substitute teacher on a U.S. Army base; and

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WHEREAS, Mona McNeese moved back to the U.S. following her
work in Japan; she settled in Oak Park to start her career as a
kindergarten teacher at Lincoln Elementary School; and

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WHEREAS, Mona McNeese proudly served as principal at
Whittier Elementary School in Oak Park, becoming the first
female principal in District 97 history; and

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WHEREAS, Mona McNeese later served as principal at Madison
and Jackson Elementary Schools in Elmhurst District 205, all

1 while raising her children and earning two master's degrees
2 and later her PhD in Public Policy Analysis from the
3 University of Illinois at Chicago at the age of 53; and

4 WHEREAS, Mona McNeese married Dr. James McNeese, in 1976,
5 and they traveled around the world together; and

6 WHEREAS, Mona McNeese retired from education in 1995,
7 after which she continued to devote her time and love to her
8 family and her three grandsons; and

9 WHEREAS, As an active member of her community, Mona
10 McNeese was well involved in local politics; she assisted
11 first as a volunteer and then as the Deputy Committeewoman for
12 the Democratic Party of Oak Park; she once looked after Malia
13 and Sasha Obama while Michelle Obama was out campaigning for
14 her husband, then State Senator Barack Obama, and at times
15 also helped shuttle Michelle around the state; and

16 WHEREAS, In addition to her other accomplishments, Mona
17 McNeese read every Pulitzer Prize winning book, which was said
18 to earn her a commendation in a column of the Chicago Tribune;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, Mona McNeese was preceded in death by her
21 husband, Dr. James McNeese, and her siblings, Ardis (George)

1 Wollenweber, Kenneth (Carol) Leininger, and Albert N.
2 Leininger; and

3 WHEREAS, Mona McNeese is survived by her children, Robin
4 (Joseph Picone) Zimmerman, Dana (Michael) Murphy, Amy McNeese,
5 and Terry (Karen Farmer) McNeese; her three grandsons, Tom
6 (Lauren Meleney), Dan (Carly Neville) and Jack (Kelly Hickey)
7 Murphy; and her brother, Paul (Sherri) Leininger; therefore,
8 be it

9 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL
10 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
11 Ramona "Mona" C. McNeese and extend our sincere condolences to
12 her family, friends, and all who knew and loved her; and be it
13 further

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