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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 Helen Marie Ramirez-Odell of Chicago, who passed away on March 22, 2022; and

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WHEREAS, Helen Ramirez-Odell was born Helen Hershinow in Chicago on July 22, 1942; she grew up in the Lincoln Square neighborhood of Chicago; she received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Loyola University Chicago, becoming a Registered Nurse in 1964; and

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WHEREAS, Helen Ramirez-Odell worked as a school nurse in the Chicago Public Schools for over 40 years until her retirement in 2011; and

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WHEREAS, Helen Ramirez-Odell was a lifelong champion for women; when she discovered that she could not make a needed purchase from Goldblatt's in the late 1960s because they did not extend credit lines to women, her outrage led her to join the Chicago National Organization for Women (NOW) and to become an activist for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, a cause she championed until her passing; and

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WHEREAS, Helen Ramirez-Odell joined the Chicago Teachers Union in the 1970s and became a member of its Women's Rights

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1 Committee, which she chaired for more than 20 years; during
2 her tenure, the committee worked to end sexual harassment,
3 supported women's advancement at the Washburne Trade School,
4 sought to improve conditions and employment for women in
5 sports, promoted women's labor history, supported women as
6 political candidates, and fought for women's health, birth
7 control, and reproductive choice, among many other issues; and

8 WHEREAS, Helen Ramirez-Odell was a founder of the Women in
9 Labor History Project in 1995, later called the Working
10 Women's History Project (WWHP); during this time, she was also
11 active in the Chicago Coalition of Labor Union Women and
12 Cassandra: Radical Feminist Nurses Network; and

13 WHEREAS, Helen Ramirez-Odell wrote and published Working
14 Without Uniforms: School Nursing In Chicago 1951 - 2001; she
15 also produced a manuscript titled RN Revolution Needed, which
16 was about the need for a feminist transformation of the
17 nursing profession; and

18 WHEREAS, Helen Ramirez-Odell will be especially remembered
19 for her contributions to women's rights; therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL
21 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
22 Helen Marie Ramirez-Odell and extend our sincere condolences

1 to her family, friends, and all who knew and loved her; and be
2 it further

3 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
4 presented to the family of Helen Ramirez-Odell as an
5 expression of our deepest sympathy.