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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated was founded on December 4, 1906 by seven college men, respectfully known as the "Seven Jewels", on the campus of Cornell University in Ithaca, New York and became the first intercollegiate Greek-letter fraternity established by and for African Americans; and

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WHEREAS, The Seven Jewels of the fraternity, Henry Arthur Callis, Charles Henry Chapman, Eugene Kinckle Jones, George Biddle Kelley, Nathaniel Allison Murray, Robert Harold Ogle, and Vertner Woodson Tandy, recognized the need for a strong bond of brotherhood among African descendants in this country and the need to help correct the educational, economic, political, and social injustices faced by African Americans and other people of color; and

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WHEREAS, Alpha Phi Alpha initially served as a study and support group for minority students who faced racial prejudice, both educationally and socially, at Cornell University; the Jewel founders and early leaders of the fraternity succeeded in laying a firm foundation for Alpha Phi Alpha's principles of scholarship, fellowship, good character, and the uplifting of humanity; and

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1 WHEREAS, While stressing academic excellence among its
2 members since its founding, Alpha Phi Alpha has consistently
3 supplied its voice and vision to the struggle of African
4 Americans and people of color and to issues of civil rights
5 around the world; and

6 WHEREAS, The aims of Alpha Phi Alpha are manly deeds,
7 scholarship, and love for all mankind; and

8 WHEREAS, The mission of Alpha Phi Alpha is to develop
9 leaders, promote brotherhood and academic excellence, and
10 provide service and advocacy for communities, as exemplified
11 through its national programs which include "Go to High
12 School, Go to College", which focuses on the educational
13 achievement of students in elementary, secondary, and
14 post-secondary schools and has given thousands of dollars in
15 scholarship funds to deserving students, "Project Alpha",
16 which teaches teenage pregnancy prevention and sexually
17 transmitted disease prevention to young males, and its "A
18 Voteless People is a Hopeless People" campaign, a voter
19 registration and education program through which thousands of
20 voters have been educated and registered; the fraternity also
21 focuses on providing service through its strategic
22 partnerships with Big Brothers Big Sisters, the Boy Scouts of
23 America, the March of Dimes, the American Heart/American
24 Stroke Association, and the American Cancer Society; and

1 WHEREAS, For over 116 years, Alpha Phi Alpha has played a
2 fundamental role in the positive development of the character
3 and education of more than 200,000 men around the world; and

4 WHEREAS, Alpha Phi Alpha has over 700 college and alumni
5 chapters in the U.S., Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Europe;
6 this total includes 141 chapters in the Midwestern Region, and
7 32 of those chapters are in Illinois; the fraternity's
8 presence started in Illinois with the founding of the first
9 college chapter in Illinois, the Theta Chapter, in 1910 and
10 the first alumni chapter, the Xi Lambda Chapter, in 1924, both
11 in Chicago; and

12 WHEREAS, Members of Alpha Phi Alpha include many
13 noteworthy leaders in the areas of government, business,
14 entertainment, science, and higher education, including Dr.
15 Martin Luther King Jr., Thurgood Marshall, W.E.B. DuBois, John
16 Hope Franklin, John H. Johnson, Adam Clayton Powell, Andrew
17 Young, Robert Smith, and Cornel West; its membership also
18 includes federal, State, and local elected officials,
19 including U.S. Representative Danny K. Davis, former U.S.
20 Senators Edward Brook and Roland Burris, former State Senator
21 Donne E. Trotter, former State Representative Al Riley, former
22 State Representative Art Turner Jr., former Cook County Board
23 Presidents John and Todd Stroger, and former Mayor of Chicago

1 Eugene Sawyer, among countless others who have long stood at
2 the forefront of the fight for civil and human rights and
3 social change for all Americans; and

4 WHEREAS, Several Alpha Phi Alpha members have served in
5 the Illinois General Assembly, and members currently serving
6 in the 103rd General Assembly are Representative Justin
7 Slaughter, Speaker of the House of Representatives Emanuel
8 "Chris" Welch, and Senator Elgie R. Sims Jr., who also served
9 as the 26th Vice President of the Midwestern Region; and

10 WHEREAS, Alpha Phi Alpha continues to enrich the lives of
11 its members, who, in turn, provide service and advocacy for
12 the communities they serve; therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL
14 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we recognize the 2023
15 Alpha Phi Alpha Day held at the Illinois State Capitol and
16 welcome the members of Alpha Phi Alpha to the Capitol; and be
17 it further

18 RESOLVED, That we declare April 19, 2023 as Alpha Phi
19 Alpha Day in the State of Illinois in honor of Alpha Phi Alpha
20 Fraternity, Incorporated and its continued impact on the
21 communities it serves.