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SENATE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened  
3 to learn of the death of Nicholas Santos "Nick"  
4 Hernandez-Renfro of Springfield, who passed away on July 9,  
5 2023; and

6           WHEREAS, Nick Hernandez-Renfro was born in Springfield to  
7 Elmer C. and Linda Hernandez Renfro on August 24, 1986; he  
8 graduated from Ursuline Academy in 2004; in 2006, he joined  
9 the U.S. Army and served as a combat engineer; while deployed  
10 to Afghanistan, he received the Purple Heart for his heroic  
11 actions; he also served as the Modern Army Combatives  
12 instructor for the 832nd Engineer Company; and

13           WHEREAS, Nick Hernandez-Renfro earned his Bachelor of  
14 Science in Law Enforcement and Justice Administration and a  
15 minor in Fire Science from Western Illinois University in  
16 Macomb in 2008, where he was a member of the rugby team; he  
17 married Tiffany Liebe on August 11, 2018; and

18           WHEREAS, Nick Hernandez-Renfro began his career in law  
19 enforcement in 2011; he served as a police officer for the  
20 Springfield Park District and later with the Springfield  
21 Police Department, where he worked as a field training  
22 officer, a SWAT operator, a firearms instructor, and as a

1 member of the Street Crimes Unit; he had a passion for coaching  
2 fellow officers in defensive tactics, locally and abroad; he  
3 shared his knowledge through podcasts and instructional videos  
4 in an effort to fill a training void; and

5 WHEREAS, Nick Hernandez-Renfro was the owner of Paladin  
6 Combatives, a premier self-defense training facility  
7 specializing in martial arts and combat fitness for adults and  
8 children; hands-on combatives was a passion of his; he was  
9 trained in the Gracie University JiuJitsu system; he was a  
10 Gracie Survival Tactics instructor, a S.P.E.A.R.(Spontaneous  
11 Protection Enabling Accelerated Response)instructor, and a  
12 former professional Mixed Martial Artist (MMA); in his own  
13 gym, he formed a junior MMA class to educate youth on not only  
14 the fundamentals of mixed martial arts but more importantly on  
15 how to deal with situations and scenarios involving bullying;  
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Nick Hernandez-Renfro lived to serve others and  
18 make a positive impact on their lives, no matter how big or  
19 small; he enjoyed participating in worthy causes, such as the  
20 annual Polar Plunge for the Special Olympics, taking children  
21 shopping for shoes or supplies to start the school year, and  
22 being a mentor to at-risk youth; his kindness, empathy,  
23 compassion, selflessness, and ability to connect with anyone  
24 is evident when looking at the number of lives on which he has

1 made a positive, lasting impact; he was a true leader because  
2 not only did he constantly seek knowledge but he also shared  
3 that knowledge with others to make everyone stronger; and

4 WHEREAS, Nick Hernandez-Renfro was a member of Destiny  
5 Church; and

6 WHEREAS, Nick Hernandez-Renfro was preceded in death by  
7 his infant daughter, Mira Bella Renfro, and his brother,  
8 Gerald "Jerry" Renfro; and

9 WHEREAS, Nick Hernandez-Renfro is survived by his wife,  
10 Tiffany; his parents; his sisters, Nicki Renfro, Nani  
11 Hernandez, Ericka A. (Julius) White, Bianca Hernandez-Renfro,  
12 Kristin (Anthony) Oden, and Ashleigh (Ethan) Meiburg; several  
13 aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins; his  
14 father-in-love and mother-in-love, Bruce and Christie Liebe;  
15 and a number of close friends, including his military family,  
16 his mixed martial arts mentors, and his sisters and brothers  
17 in blue; therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL  
19 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
20 Nicholas Santos "Nick" Hernandez-Renfro and extend our sincere  
21 condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved  
22 him; and be it further

1           RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
2 presented to the family of Nick Hernandez-Renfro as an  
3 expression of our deepest sympathy.