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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 Lt. Col. Lester Dale Bergsten of Peoria, who passed away on February 10, 2024; and

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WHEREAS, Lt. Col. Bergsten was born in Concordia, Kansas to Samuel and Florence (Smith) Bergsten on July 8, 1930; he received his Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas; he served four years in ROTC and upon graduation received a second lieutenant commission in the United States Air Force; he married Jeanette Elsie Griggs in Delphos, Kansas on January 25, 1953; and

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WHEREAS, Lt. Col. Bergsten was called to active duty during the Korean War; he served on active duty and reserve assignments for 37 years with the United States Air Force; during his tenure, he was an instructor on the atomic bomb; later, he served as a liaison officer for the United States Air Force Academy for 20 years in Central Illinois, counseling students from area high schools and Illinois Central College; he received numerous commendations from the United States Air Force, including National Defense, USAF 20 Years of Reserve Service, Air Force Service, the Outstanding Unit Award (twice), and the Air Force Commendation; after 37 years of

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1 service with the United States Air Force, he retired with the
2 rank of lieutenant colonel in 1990; and

3 WHEREAS, Lt. Col. Bergsten worked at Caterpillar, Inc. as
4 an engineer for 40 years, retiring in 1992; he had assignments
5 at the Peoria Proving Ground, the Gas Turbine Engine Division,
6 and the Product Safety and Environmental Control Division; he
7 was a registered professional engineer in the states of
8 California and Illinois; and

9 WHEREAS, Lt. Col. Bergsten served on the Peoria City
10 Council as the District 5 Councilman for 20 years from 1973 to
11 1993; on his retirement from the city council, he was honored
12 by having the Peoria Public Works Facility on Dries Lane named
13 after him; one of his key assignments while on the city council
14 was working on a joint city-county committee that oversaw the
15 construction and operations of three Peoria City/Peoria County
16 landfills; he served on this committee for over 44 years; he
17 was a key person in planning the annexation of Pioneer
18 Industrial Park and Willow Knolls Shopping Center to the City
19 of Peoria; he was active in the Republican Party and served as
20 a precinct committeeman for many years; and

21 WHEREAS, Lt. Col. Bergsten was a member of a number of
22 organizations, including Pi Tau Sigma and the Society of
23 Automotive Engineers; he held life memberships in the Silver

1 Falcon Association, the American Society of Mechanical
2 Engineers, the Air Force Association, and the Reserve Officers
3 Association; and

4 WHEREAS, Lt. Col. Bergsten was preceded in death by his
5 wife of 63 years, Jeanette; his parents; his son, Paul Lester
6 Bergsten; and his grandson, Houston Lee Arrowood; and

7 WHEREAS, Lt. Col. Bergsten is survived by his children,
8 Dr. Eric Dale (Rebecca) Bergsten and Ann Lee Arrowood; his
9 grandchildren, Tova and Galen Bergsten; and his
10 great-grandchildren, Jase and Macy Arrowood; therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL
12 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
13 Lt. Col. Lester Dale Bergsten extend our sincere condolences
14 to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be
15 it further

16 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
17 presented to the family of Lt. Col. Bergsten as an expression
18 of our deepest sympathy.