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HOUSE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The members of the House of Representatives of the State of Illinois learned with regret of the death of Gary Eugene Grace on March 5, 2004; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Grace was born on June 7, 1951, in Urbana to Lyle and Berry Shade Grace; he graduated from Urbana High School and Parkland College and was a fifth generation farmer for more than 30 years, along with his brother on land north of Urbana; he married Susan Wagner on August 19, 1972, in Urbana; and

WHEREAS, He attended Twin City Bible Church in Urbana; he served on numerous area boards, including the Champaign County Farm Bureau board of directors from 1997 to 1998 and as its president from 2000 to 2002; he was also a member of the bureau's foundation board and oversaw fundraising efforts for scholarships and other programs; he and his brother, Roger, shared the Champaign News-Gazette's Farm Leader of the Year award in 2001; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Grace served on the board of directors and was instrumental in starting Earth Partners, the State's first agriculture literacy program for elementary through high school curriculum; he served as president of the University High parent faculty organization; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Grace stood out from the crowd because he fought for agriculture issues on local, State, and federal levels; he lobbied for education funding reform and property tax relief; he rallied support for the farm bureau foundation by organizing raffles and other events; he was known as a "go-getter" and is remembered as a leader with a vision and the passion and ability to accomplish his dreams, and his character and honesty were beyond reproach; and

1           WHEREAS, He loved gardening and enjoyed rock climbing and  
2           investigating archeological artifacts; above all, his family  
3           and his faith were most important to him; and

4           WHEREAS, The passing of Gary E. Grace has been deeply felt  
5           by many, especially his wife, Susan; his parents, Lyle and  
6           Berry Shade Grace; his sons, Tim Grace and Andy Grace; his  
7           brothers, Roger Grace and David Grace; and his sister, Barbara  
8           Wilson; therefore, be it

9           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
10          NINETY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we  
11          mourn the passing of Gary Eugene Grace, a progressive farm  
12          leader who was a credit to his community and family; and be it  
13          further

14          RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
15          presented to the family of Gary E. Grace as an expression of  
16          our heartfelt sorrow for their loss.