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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Senate of the State of Illinois were saddened to learn of the death of Robert Reynolds Bliss of Hillsboro on Tuesday, April 29, 2003; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. Bliss was born in Hillsboro on November 16, 1911 to Clinton Phillips and Lucia Christina Matilda (Evans) Bliss; he graduated from Hillsboro Community High School with the Class of 1929; he attended the University of Illinois for two years; he married Patricia Weingand on June 30, 1934 in Paxton; they were married for almost 70 years; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. Bliss was a part of the third generation of Bliss's to run The Montgomery County News; he and his brother, Tom, partnered at it until Tom's retirement in 1971; during most of his career with The News, Mr. Bliss reported the news, wrote feature stories and editorials, took photographs, and maintained the newspaper's letterpress equipment; in later years, after his daughter and son-in-law, Nancy (Bliss) and Richard Slepicka, assumed leadership of the paper, he continued to write obituaries, editorials, and weekly historical columns; his final column was in the March 8, 2003 edition of The Montgomery County News; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. Bliss was honored many times by his peers and his community; in 1968, both he and his brother, Tom were named Master Editors by the Southern Illinois Editorial Association and were inducted into the Journalism Hall of Fame at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale; he was named the Illinois Press Association's Editor of the Year in 1971; he was the recipient of the Arthur Darwin Jenkins Award for Achievement in Journalism, and in 1993, he won the Eugene Cervi Award from the International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors; and

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WHEREAS, Because he was recognized as a well-versed

1 small-town editor both statewide and nationally, Mr. Bliss
2 was invited to participate in a panel discussion conducted by
3 Bill Moyers and broadcast on public television in 1972; in
4 March of 1988, he was interviewed by NBC news anchor Tom
5 Pettit on the coming Presidential primary election; he was
6 honored by his hometown in 1978 when he received the
7 Hillsboro Sertoma Club's Service to Mankind Award; and

8 WHEREAS, Mr. Bliss was a lifelong Democrat, a Hillsboro
9 volunteer fireman for many years, a 50-year member of
10 Hillsboro Moose Lodge 1377, a member of First Presbyterian
11 Church of Hillsboro, and a former member of Hillsboro Country
12 Club and Chamber of Commerce; and

13 WHEREAS, The passing of Robert Reynolds Bliss has been
14 deeply felt by all who knew him, especially his wife,
15 Patricia; his daughters, Betsy Bliss and Nancy Slepicka; his
16 grandchildren, Christian Alexander Bliss Ach, Ekaterina
17 "Kate" Slepicka, and Pavel Slepicka; and his step-grandson,
18 James P. Nicholls III; therefore be it

19 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-THIRD GENERAL
20 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing
21 of Robert R. Bliss and extend to his friends, family, and
22 community our sincere condolences on the passing of a truly
23 great citizen of the State of Illinois; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
25 presented to the family of Robert R. Bliss as an expression
26 of our deepest sympathy.