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SENATE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The members of the Senate of the State of Illinois learned with regret of the death of Reverend James Solomon Benn III of Springfield on Friday, March 12, 2004; and

WHEREAS, James Solomon Benn III was born January 20, 1921 in Greenville, South Carolina to Reverend James Solomon Jr. and Lottie Mae Carter Benn; he married Flora Annetta Baber in 1950; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Benn earned a bachelor's degree from Wilberforce (Ohio) University, a master's degree from Columbia University, and a theology degree from Garrett Evangelical Seminary at Northwestern University; he earned a doctorate of divinity in 1955 and a doctorate of humanities in 1985, both from Monrovia College in West Africa; he also earned a doctorate of divinity from B.F. Lee Seminary at Edward Waters College; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Benn valiantly served his country in the U.S. Army during World War II and the Korean War; he served in Europe and Asia and was commissioned a lieutenant in 1948; he received several awards, including the Good Conduct Medal; he also served in the ROTC; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Benn was a pastor at several churches, including St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1981 and Ward Chapel AME Church in Peoria from 1955 to 1958, where he also was a builder; and

WHEREAS, The work of Reverend Benn was published several times; he received the Distinguished Personalities of the West and Midwest award in 1972 and the NAACP Distinguished Religious Award for Community Service in 1987; he was honored by the Common Council Resolution; and

1           WHEREAS, Reverend Benn was active in the community and had  
2 served in the capacity of an officer for several organizations,  
3 including the Sangamon County Community Service Block Grants,  
4 where he was vice-president; the Illinois AME Conference, where  
5 he was director of continuing education; the Illinois Annual  
6 Conference, where he was chairman, board of admissions; the  
7 Human Services Consortium, Fourth Episcopal District, where he  
8 was executive secretary; and the State of Michigan, Handicapper  
9 Concerns, where he was commissioner in 1979; he was a charter  
10 member and co-organizer of MacDougal/Hunt Citizens District  
11 Council in Detroit, Michigan in 1977; and

12           WHEREAS, The passing of Reverend James Solomon Benn III has  
13 been deeply felt by many, especially his wife, Flora Annetta;  
14 his sons, George Henry Benn and James Solomon Benn IV; his  
15 daughter, Victoria D. Benn Rochelle; his three grandchildren;  
16 and his many nieces, nephews, and cousins; therefore, be it

17           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-THIRD GENERAL  
18 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the death of  
19 Reverend James Solomon Benn III, and we extend our deepest  
20 sympathy to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved  
21 him; and be it further

22           RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
23 presented to the family of Reverend Benn as an expression of  
24 our sincere condolences.