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SENATE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The members of the Senate of the State of Illinois learned with regret of the death of Sharon L. Merritt on Saturday, July 10, 2004; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Merritt was born in Chicago; she graduated from St. Louis University with a bachelor's degree in nursing in 1962; she moved to California and received her master's in nursing from the University of California, San Francisco, in 1964; that same year, she met her future husband at a party; they had their first date on a Thursday, their second the next day, and on Sunday Frank J. Merritt proposed to her; they were married four months later; and

WHEREAS, The Merritts moved to St. Louis in 1971 and Mrs. Merritt taught nursing at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville; she earned her PhD in education at the University of Missouri-St. Louis in 1982, while continuing to teach; in 1987, the Merritts moved to Hinsdale and she took an associate professorship at the University of Illinois at Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Merritt worked for years with people with sleep disorders, such as narcolepsy and sleep apnea; she also directed the Center for Narcolepsy Research at the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Nursing; her concentration was on pupillometry, the science of measuring eye pupil size, which can clinically determine sleepiness; her research validated that the sleepier a person gets, the smaller their pupils become; the four-year study on pupillometry will be published soon; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Merritt is remembered as a hands-on director and was good at hiring quality personnel; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Merritt played tennis, a sport she started at

1 age 34; and

2 WHEREAS, The passing of Sharon L. Merritt has been deeply
3 felt by many, especially her husband, Frank J. Merritt; her
4 daughters, Michelle and Melissa; her sisters, Colette Loecke
5 and Joyce Spizzirri; her brother, Louis Spizzirri; and her
6 three grandchildren; therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-THIRD GENERAL
8 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
9 Sharon L. Merritt, and we extend our deepest sympathy to her
10 family, friends, and all who knew and loved her; and be it
11 further

12 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
13 presented to the family of Sharon L. Merritt as an expression
14 of our sincerest condolences for their loss.