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HOUSE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, U.S. Army Sergeant Kenneth Levi Ridgley, formerly of Olney, died on March 30, 2005, protecting his squad members from enemy fire at a checkpoint in Mosul, Iraq; just before he gave his life, he valiantly killed several insurgents while saving the lives of the members of his unit; and

WHEREAS, The men of his squad and platoon are alive because of the actions of Sgt. Ridgley, who sacrificed everything for the men he was sworn to lead and protect; his actions ended the firefight, allowing his men to be evacuated for medical attention; and

WHEREAS, Sgt. Ridgley joined the Illinois Army National Guard while a senior in high school, attended Southern Illinois University, and after fulfilling his obligation to the National Guard, he joined the Army and was a member of the 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, stationed at Fort Lewis, near Tacoma, Washington; and

WHEREAS, Sgt. Ridgley was a 1993 graduate of East Richland High School and was a champion steer roper during his time in high school and college; and

WHEREAS, Sgt. Ridgley will be remembered as a competitive young man with a sweet disposition who loved riding horses and playing the drums; and

WHEREAS, Sgt. Ridgley leaves behind his mother, Betty Richards; his father, Clarence Richards; his wife as of August 7, 2004, Charity, and her 3-year-old son, Dillon; and his brother and three sisters; and

WHEREAS, Sgt. Ridgley volunteered for this second tour of duty in Iraq after having served as a medic at the beginning of

1 the war due to emergency medical training he received in Olney;
2 therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
4 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
5 together with his family, friends, fellow members of the United
6 States armed forces, and the citizens of this State and this
7 great nation, we mourn the passing of U.S. Army Sergeant
8 Kenneth Levi Ridgley, and we extend to his family our sincerest
9 condolences; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That we honor the memory of Sgt. Ridgley's life
11 and his willingness to serve our country, which led to him
12 making the ultimate sacrifice; the sheer fortitude and personal
13 courage that he demonstrated was that of a real American hero;
14 and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
16 presented to his family as an expression of our deepest
17 sympathy.