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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives were deeply saddened to learn of the death of George Turk of Chicago on June 19, 2005; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. Turk was born December 24, 1931, in Birmingham, Alabama, to Theodore Turk and Olivia Brewster; and

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WHEREAS, After spending his early childhood in Alabama, he moved to Chicago and was raised by Walter and Olivia (Brewster) Casey; he attended elementary school at Douglas and Wendell Phillips and graduated from Dunbar High School, where he was an outstanding student athlete and joined the National Guard; and

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WHEREAS, He attended Wilson Junior College and continued his education at Chicago Teacher's College, where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in 1955; he later attended DePaul University and graduated in 1972 with a master's degree in education; he was drafted into the Army in 1955 and served in Germany for two years before being honorably discharged with the rank of Sergeant; and

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WHEREAS, He married Mary Louise Scott on December 28, 1955, and they had two sons, George Wilkes and Jonathan George; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. Turk was an educator by profession and began teaching in the Chicago Public School system as a substitute in 1955; he later taught full-time in a number of schools, including Shakespeare, Herzl, and Shoop; he was appointed assistant principal of the Jenner School; in 1975, he was named principal of Fernwood Elementary School where he served with distinction until his retirement in 1992; and

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WHEREAS, During his time as a principal, he dedicated himself to developing, training, and supporting black

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1 principals through the Samuel B. Stratton Association; he
2 served as the president of this organization of black
3 principals for many years; and

4 WHEREAS, After retiring from the Chicago Public School
5 system, he helped to establish the Developing Communities
6 Project Adult Literacy Program of Maple Park and became a
7 leading sales representative for the Globe Fearon Company; and

8 WHEREAS, He was an accomplished tenor and choir director
9 whose musical talents blossomed as choir director at Greater
10 Institutional A.M.E. Church; in 1962, he became one of the
11 charter members of the Maple Park United Methodist Church and
12 served as Minister of Music for over 30 years; he worked in the
13 church in many capacities over the years, serving as chairman
14 of the Pastor/Parish Relations Committee, president of the
15 United Methodist Men, and chairman of the Administrative Board;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, He loved people and tremendously treasured the
18 life he was blessed to lead; in addition to singing in a number
19 of choirs throughout Chicago, he enjoyed all types of musical
20 artists, from Howlin' Wolf to Pavarotti, and always seemed to
21 have a song in his heart; he was an avid bowler and was an
22 enthusiastic member of the Maple Park Homeowners League and the
23 Pilgrim Baptist Church League for many years; he also loved to
24 cook for family and friends and to laugh and play cards with
25 his buddies for hours on end; he had great affection for the
26 Maple Park neighborhood and was one of the early presidents of
27 the Maple Park Homeowners Association; and

28 WHEREAS, Mr. Turk led an exemplary life and because of his
29 remarkable journey was asked to provide his perspective in the
30 PBS documentary entitled "Remembering Chicago"; he will be
31 remembered as a loving husband, father, brother, relative, and
32 friend; and

1 WHEREAS, He was preceded in death by his mother, Olivia;
2 his father, Theodore; his stepfather, Walter Casey; and his
3 sisters, Doris and Janice; and

4 WHEREAS, The passing of George Turk is felt by all who knew
5 and loved him, especially his wife of nearly 50 years, Mary
6 Louise; his sons, George Wilkes (Melinda) and Jonathan George
7 (Sherri); his grandsons, Morgan, Tyler, Joshua, and Mathew; his
8 granddaughter, Olivia; his brother, Theodore; his sister,
9 Loretta; his mother-in-law, Mary Scott; and a host of relatives
10 and friends; therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
12 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
13 we mourn the passing of George Turk and extend to his family
14 and friends our thoughts and prayers during this difficult
15 time; and be it further

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