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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the House of Representatives of the State of Illinois learned with sadness of the recent death of Frank Sparks of Chicago; and

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WHEREAS, Frank Sparks was born May 18, 1934; he married Peggy Willis in 1962, and afterward they lived in South Shore; Frank was the loving father of five children; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. Sparks was considered a legend in the Chicago salsa community; after his passing, "salsaleros" young and old fondly remembered the "gentleman" dancer who, even in his eighth decade of life, regularly danced until midnight or later at one of several Chicago salsa clubs; he'd then drive home to his sleeping wife, and the next morning the pair would talk salsa over coffee; and

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WHEREAS, Frank and Peggy met in their 20s while dancing the cha-cha at a South Side club; Peggy remembered that Frank stood out from the rest of the dancers because he was so supple and had a particularly skilled way of spinning and dipping a woman; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. Sparks was a businessman with businesses in South Shore and Hyde Park; for almost three decades, he owned a record store called Scent-n-Sound; he later owned a variety store; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. Sparks had a number of hobbies, including playing pool and cards, but he lived for dance - ballroom, cha-cha, mambo, and salsa, which was his favorite; even though he had a "bum" knee and a "bum" arm, nothing stopped him from enjoying a dance; other dancers often confided in him because they knew he was genuinely interested and wanted to help; he would gently tell a newer salsa dancer to stand up straight and

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1 listen to the music if he wanted to find the best in the music;  
2 and

3 WHEREAS, In recent years, Mr. Sparks could often be found  
4 at the Buzz nightclub on West Erie; a lanky African-American  
5 man with a shaved head, he favored pressed dress pants, an open  
6 shirt with a collar, and oxfords - and, sometimes, a white or  
7 beige felt cap tilted down to the right; and

8 WHEREAS, Mr. Sparks had often told his wife that when he  
9 died, he hoped it would be on the dance floor; on the night he  
10 died, Mr. Sparks was dancing salsa at Green Dolphin Street on  
11 Ashland; he had waited a long time for just the right salsa -  
12 something mild and romantic, a friend said; after just such a  
13 dance, he collapsed and died of an apparent heart attack; and

14 WHEREAS, Frank loved his community and made many  
15 contributions to society; and

16 WHEREAS, The passing of Frank Sparks has been deeply felt  
17 by many, especially his wife, Peggy; his children, Leonardo,  
18 Vincent, Francesca, Kimberly, and Evelyn; and his nine  
19 grandchildren; therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
21 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
22 we mourn the passing of Frank Sparks, and we extend our deepest  
23 sympathy to his family and friends and to all who knew and  
24 loved him; and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
26 presented to Frank Sparks' family as an expression of our  
27 sincere condolences.