



1 SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Joan B. Coogan of Olympia Fields passed away on
3 April 19, 2005; and

4 WHEREAS, Mrs. Coogan (nee Cyphers) had a passion for
5 writing while growing up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; while
6 attending high school, she penned stories for the high school
7 newspaper and became its editor; as an adult, while raising her
8 family in Olympia Fields, she volunteered to be a publicist for
9 suburban community organizations and worked as a freelance
10 writer; her fondness for the spoken word served her well as she
11 sought support and donations for the social service agencies
12 she helped found and fervently believed in; and

13 WHEREAS, During the late 1960s, she did volunteer work with
14 the Urban Gateways Summer Day camp at Temple Anshe Sholom,
15 Olympia Fields; in this program, she taught cooking classes,
16 recruited volunteers, and served as publicity chairman; her
17 older children served as camp counselors; her next volunteer
18 assignment was with the East Chicago Heights Head Start program
19 in which she was able to involve her children as junior
20 volunteers on school-free days; and

21 WHEREAS, In 1969, she helped launch Respond Now, a Chicago
22 Heights-based agency that provides emergency help to needy
23 families in the south suburbs of Chicago; she was on its board
24 for more than two decades; and

25 WHEREAS, Although she worked on several projects for
26 Respond Now in 1969, Mrs. Coogan scored a major success with a
27 "Christmas Store", an idea she developed to serve needy
28 families in a more dignified way than the traditional Christmas
29 basket; families who shopped at the store purchased items as
30 well as food for a fraction of the retail value, sparing them
31 the embarrassment of receiving charity and giving the pleasure

1 of Christmas shopping at nominal prices; and

2 WHEREAS, Ten years later, she became a founding board
3 member of Hospice Suburban South and served for a number of
4 years as its executive director; it has since evolved into a
5 regional office of Palliative CareCenter & Hospice of the North
6 Shore; and

7 WHEREAS, She wrote more than fifty feature articles for the
8 south suburban Star Newspapers; she also wrote a semi-monthly
9 consumer interest column, Stone Soup, for five years for the
10 same newspaper; her column was a reader favorite because she
11 wrote about consumer issues with a sense of humor; and

12 WHEREAS, She never doubted she could accomplish what she
13 wanted to do; she will be remembered as a delightful person
14 with a great sense of humor who was down to earth and very
15 practical; she was a great organizer and had an ability to move
16 others to action; she was also very outgoing, friendly, and
17 always open and concerned about people; and

18 WHEREAS, Although she will be deeply missed by those who
19 knew and admired her, her legacy of achievement will serve as
20 an enduring reminder of her selflessness, and she will
21 undoubtedly be remembered with much respect and affection for
22 many years to come; and

23 WHEREAS, Mrs. Coogan is survived by her husband of more
24 than 50 years, John; her sons, John, Michael, James, Dennis,
25 and Thomas; her daughters, Joan and Mary; her sister, Marilyn
26 Ryan; and her 15 grandchildren; therefore, be it

27 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL
28 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we extend our sincerest
29 condolences to the members of her family and to all those who
30 mourn the passing of Joan B. Coogan; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
2 presented to her family as an expression of our deepest
3 sympathy.