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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Senate of the State of Illinois learned with sadness of the death of Gwendolyn Blackburn on April 8, 2005; and

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WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Blackburn was born Gwendolyn Sharlita Finch on January 15, 1935, to Marie M. Finch and John L. Finch; and

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WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Blackburn was the fourth child, joining eldest sibling Gloria (Moseberry); her brother, John, Jr.; and her sister, Anita (Wright); and

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WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Blackburn, in her formative years, attended Edmund Burke Elementary School, A.O. Sexton Elementary, and Englewood High School; and

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WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Blackburn married Clifton H. Blackburn on February 17, 1953; and

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WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Blackburn was a sales associate for Archway Cookies and Parker House Sausages; and

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WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Blackburn was a den mother for the Cub Scouts and a 4-H leader; and

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WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Blackburn attended cosmetology school and Teachers College; and

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WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Blackburn was a freelance demonstrator for Jesse Owens Marketing; and

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WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Blackburn was the owner of Ask Gwen Bridal for 20 years, the first black woman in the bridal business in Chicago, and she ran several businesses from home,

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1 including event planning, catering, clothing design, antiques,
2 and collectibles; and

3 WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Blackburn was active in the civil rights
4 movement having been an organizer for the March on Washington;
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6 WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Blackburn was a teacher in the Freedom
7 School, teaching black family values to our youth; and

8 WHEREAS, Gwendolyn Blackburn was the loving wife and proud
9 mother of three independent thinking sons, Kahil, Chelton, and
10 Cherman; the doting grandmother to her ten grandchildren; a
11 mother to countless young women; and a role model to all who
12 came within her beguiling ways; therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL
14 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
15 Gwendolyn Blackburn, and we extend our sincerest condolences to
16 her friends, family, and community; and be it further

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