



HR0928

LRB095 18788 GRL 44914 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of John F.
4 Stroger Jr., who passed away on January 18, 2008; and

5 WHEREAS, John F. Stroger Jr. was born on May 19, 1929 in
6 Helena, Arkansas; his parents were John and Ella (Jones)
7 Stroger; and

8 WHEREAS, John F. Stroger Jr. graduated from Eliza Miller
9 High School in 1949; after graduation, he attended Xavier
10 University of Louisiana, the only black Catholic university in
11 the nation, earning a degree in accounting; he taught school,
12 coached basketball, and worked closely with the NAACP, where he
13 vigorously fought for the abolishment of poll taxes; and

14 WHEREAS, At his mother's urging, John F. Stroger Jr. moved
15 to Chicago in 1953, where he became involved in Chicago's South
16 Side Democratic Party; there, he went under the tutelage of
17 political legends such as William Dawson, Ralph Metcalfe, and
18 Harold Washington; during this time, he met and fell in love
19 with Yonnie Rita; together, they had three children, Yonnie
20 Lynn, Hans Eric, and Todd Herman; and

21 WHEREAS, John F. Stroger Jr. was appointed as an assistant

1 auditor with the Municipal Court of Chicago in 1954; he served
2 as personnel director for the Cook County Jail from 1955 to
3 1961; while working as a financial director of the State of
4 Illinois Department of Revenue, he earned his law degree from
5 DePaul University College of Law in 1965; and

6 WHEREAS, In 1968, John F. Stroger Jr. was elected Chicago's
7 8th Ward Committeeman, where his love of people and politics
8 catapulted the ward to one of the highest vote-getting wards in
9 the city; after his election to the Cook County Board of
10 Commissioners in 1970, he went on to chair every major
11 committee, including the Finance, Health, Building, and Zoning
12 committees; and

13 WHEREAS, In the early 1990s, John F. Stroger Jr. united
14 with the League of Women Voters in order to establish
15 single-member district representation in Cook County; his work
16 to make county commissioners more visible, accountable, and
17 accessible earned him the nickname "Father of Districting";
18 thanks to his monumental efforts, single-member district
19 representation became a reality in 1994; and

20 WHEREAS, In 1994, John F. Stroger Jr. was elected to serve
21 as the first African-American president of the Cook County
22 Board and Forest Preserve District, a position he served
23 faithfully for 12 years; as president, he balanced

1 multi-billion dollar budgets, launched a domestic violence
2 courthouse, instituted a Juvenile Drug Court, appointed a
3 Commission on Women's Issues, and opened an AIDS treatment and
4 research facility; in 2002, he was instrumental in the creation
5 of a state-of-the-art hospital, which was later named after him
6 in his honor; and

7 WHEREAS, John F. Stroger Jr. was a past president of the
8 National Association of Counties; he was appointed by former
9 President Bill Clinton to serve on the Advisory Committee On
10 Intergovernmental Relations; he also had a deep relationship
11 with the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity; and

12 WHEREAS, John F. Stroger Jr. was a longtime member of St.
13 Felicitas Catholic Church; and

14 WHEREAS, John F. Stroger Jr. was preceded in death by his
15 parents and his son, Hans Eric; and

16 WHEREAS, John F. Stroger Jr. is survived by his wife; his
17 daughter, Yonnie Lynn (LaRon); his son, Todd Herman (Jeanine);
18 his grandchildren, Hans Eric and Claire Monique; and his many
19 nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends; and

20 WHEREAS, John F. Stroger Jr. will be remembered by all who
21 knew and loved him as a compassionate, loyal, and strong man

1 whose willingness to help the disenfranchised was legendary;
2 therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
4 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
5 mourn, along with his family and friends, the passing of John
6 F. Stroger Jr.; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
8 presented to the family of John F. Stroger Jr. as an expression
9 of our sympathy.