



HR0946

LRB095 18789 KXB 44915 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 former  
4 Chicago mayor Eugene Sawyer, who passed away on January 19,  
5 2008; and

6           WHEREAS, Eugene Sawyer was known for his calm manner and  
7 ability to forge compromise; he rose to prominence in the days  
8 following Chicago Mayor Harold Washington's death in November  
9 of 1987; after a bitter, racially charged debate, a split  
10 council voted to name him as Mayor Washington's replacement; he  
11 served as mayor until 1989, when he lost in the Democratic  
12 primary to current Mayor Richard M. Daley; and

13           WHEREAS, He was born in Greensboro, Alabama; after moving  
14 from Alabama to Chicago in 1957 with a degree in chemistry from  
15 Alabama State University, he was hired as an industrial waste  
16 coordinator for the Chicago Sewer Department; and in 1971 he  
17 was elected 6th Ward alderman; and

18           WHEREAS, Eugene Sawyer was soft-spoken and quiet; even  
19 after he became mayor, he often held breakfast meetings at a  
20 South Side restaurant called Ms. Biscuit; during his brief  
21 tenure, Mayor Sawyer pushed through several initiatives that  
22 Mayor Washington had started or supported, including a

1 human-rights ordinance that had languished in the council for  
2 years before it was approved in 1988; and

3 WHEREAS, After leaving office, he became an officer of an  
4 energy company; he later switched the firm's focus to wholesale  
5 tobacco deals; while he stayed in touch with politics, he spent  
6 much of his time following sports and fancied himself a  
7 talented poker player; he was also a devout member of his  
8 church and a devoted family man; and

9 WHEREAS, Eugene Sawyer is survived by his wife, Veronica;  
10 his children, Roderick, Shedrick, and Sheryl McGill; his  
11 brothers Ernest and Charles; his sister Shirley; and his four  
12 grandchildren; he was preceded in death by his sister, Melnee;  
13 therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
15 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we  
16 mourn, along with his family and friends, the passing of former  
17 Chicago mayor Eugene Sawyer; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
19 presented to the family of Eugene Sawyer as a symbol of our  
20 sincere sympathy.