



HR0948

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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 Reverend
4 Kenneth B. Smith Sr., of Chicago, who passed away on January
5 21, 2008; and

6 WHEREAS, Kenneth Smith was born in Montclair, New Jersey,
7 on February 19, 1931, the fifth child of Dorothy and William
8 Smith; he received his Bachelor's degree in history from
9 Virginia Union University and his Master's degree at Drew
10 University; he came to Chicago in the 1950s, worked for the
11 Wabash Avenue YMCA, and received his divinity degree from
12 Bethany Theological Seminary in Oak Brook in 1960; and

13 WHEREAS, After his ordination in the United Church of
14 Christ, he served as assistant minister at the Congregational
15 Church of Park Manor and was the founding pastor of the Trinity
16 United Church of Christ; he later served in the Chicago
17 Community Renewal Society and as senior pastor at the Church of
18 the Good Shepherd, Congregational, in Washington Park; he was a
19 national figure in the reform of the United Church of Christ in
20 the 1970s, and was named chairman of the national executive
21 committee in 1971; and

22 WHEREAS, In 1984, he became president of the Chicago

1 Theological Seminary, a position he held until 1998; while
2 president, he helped attract new talent to the school's
3 teaching and administrative positions and helped the school
4 achieve better financial stability; his devotion to religious
5 studies was acknowledged by the Chicago Theological Seminary
6 with the naming of the Kenneth B. Smith Chair in Religious
7 Studies in his honor; he was also awarded the Graham Taylor
8 Award in Public Ministry by the Seminary for his devotion and
9 dedication; and

10 WHEREAS, His devotion to the public included serving as
11 Adolescent Council Member for the Carnegie Corporation, New
12 York; serving on former President Clinton's Taskforce on Teen
13 Pregnancy; serving on the Visiting Committee of the University
14 of Chicago School of Social Administration; serving on the
15 Board of the National Center for the Humanities, the Board of
16 the Community Development Corporation of Bank of America,
17 Illinois, the YMCA Metropolitan Board of Managers, the AARP
18 Andrus Foundation Board of Trustees, and serving as Treasurer
19 of the United Way of Chicago; and

20 WHEREAS, In addition, Reverend Smith also was a former
21 board member of the Illinois Service Federal Savings and Loan
22 Associates and worked with the Chicago Urban League; he served
23 as a Trustee to both DePaul University and Talledega College;
24 he was also a senior fellow of the Chicago Community Trust; in

1 1979 he was appointed to the Chicago Board of Education and
2 served for one year as president of the Board, working to
3 desegregate Chicago schools and fix financial problems; and

4 WHEREAS, His many honors include being named Volunteer of
5 the Year from the United Way of Chicago and Humanitarian of the
6 Year from the Abraham Lincoln Center; his eight honorary
7 doctorates include ones bestowed by Roosevelt University and
8 Chicago State University; he was named Urban Leaguer of the
9 Year by the Chicago Urban League; in addition, he received many
10 other honors and awards for his lifetime of service to others;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, The passing of Reverend Kenneth B. Smith Sr. will
13 be deeply felt by his wife of thirty-seven years, Gladys Smith;
14 his sons, Kenneth B. Smith, Jr. and Kristen B. Smith; his
15 daughter, Kourtney (Luther) Montgomery; his sisters, Juanita
16 Smith, Hettie Smith, and Hester Robinson; his brother, Peter
17 Smith, Sr.; and his grandchildren, Kenneth B. Smith III, Kara
18 Smith, Kevin Smith, Kara Montgomery, Kelsey Smith, and Luther
19 Montgomery; he will be remembered as a kind and faithful
20 gentleman by those that knew him; therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
22 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
23 mourn, along with his family, friends, and the many people

1 whose lives were touched by him, the passing of Reverend
2 Kenneth B. Smith Sr.; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
4 presented to the family of Reverend Smith as a symbol of our
5 sincere sympathy.