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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of LaClaire Lissetta Jones Richards, who passed away on November 1, 2008; and

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WHEREAS, LaClaire Jones Richards was born in Pine Bluff, Arkansas on January 9, 1931; her family moved to Kansas City, Kansas when she was an infant; and

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WHEREAS, LaClaire Jones Richards received her bachelor's degree from National College in Kansas City, Kansas, her master's degree in Social Work from the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas, and performed postgraduate work at Columbia University in New York; she was also a diplomate in Clinical Social Work and was a certified gerontologist; and

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WHEREAS, LaClaire Jones Richards had a long and distinguished career in social work; her professional career, which began in 1956, included positions at the Hastings State Hospital in Hastings, Nebraska, the VA Medical Center in Knoxville, Iowa, the Mental Health Institute in Cherokee, Iowa, and the VA Medical Center in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, from which she retired in 1996; and

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WHEREAS, LaClaire Jones Richards' teaching experiences

1 included mentoring students from the University of Iowa School
2 of Medicine in Iowa City, Iowa, the College of Osteopathic
3 Medicine in Des Moines, Iowa, South Dakota State University in
4 Brookings, South Dakota, Central College in Pella, Iowa, the
5 University of South Dakota in Vermillion, South Dakota, and
6 Augustana College in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, where she
7 taught Minority/Black Studies; she also served as a field
8 instructor for graduate students for the University of Missouri
9 in Columbia, Missouri, the University of Iowa in Iowa City,
10 Iowa, and the Augustana/Sioux Falls College Joint Social Work
11 Program in Sioux Falls, South Dakota; and

12 WHEREAS, LaClaire Jones Richards was an active member of
13 her community; she served on the boards of the Visiting Nurses
14 Association, YWCA, and NAACP, where she was the education chair
15 and actively worked in civil rights issues; she also worked
16 with minority inmates at the South Dakota State Penitentiary in
17 Sioux Falls, South Dakota; she was named President of the
18 Nebraska Association of Hospital Social Workers in 1959,
19 President of the South Dakota Chapter of the National
20 Association of Social Workers in 1981, and South Dakota Social
21 Worker of the Year in 1983; she also was awarded a medal for
22 having been the only 50-year member of the National Association
23 of Social Workers in South Dakota; and

24 WHEREAS, LaClaire Jones Richards loved singing and reading

1 her Bible; she was a member of her church choir and also sang
2 with the South Dakota Symphony Choir; she was an active member
3 in her church's programs, having served as a Ministries
4 Deaconess and in the AWANA program; and

5 WHEREAS, LaClaire Jones Richards was preceded in death by
6 her parents, Artie and Geraldine Jones; her brothers, Artie Jr.
7 and Alva; and her sisters, Evelyn and Geraldine; and

8 WHEREAS, LaClaire Jones Richards is survived by her husband
9 of 50 years, Dr. George Richards; her children, Leslie
10 Richards-Yellen (David N.); Dr. Lia Richards-Palmiter (Dr.
11 David J.), and Jorge (Lisa); and her eight grandchildren; and

12 WHEREAS, LaClaire Jones Richards will be remembered by all
13 who knew and loved her for her wonderful smile, her unequalled
14 kindness towards one and all, her deep faith, her great
15 compassion, and her tireless energy to improve the lives of
16 everyone she touched; therefore, be it

17 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL
18 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with
19 her family and friends, the passing of LaClaire Lissetta Jones
20 Richards; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be

1 presented to the family of LaClaire Jones Richards as an
2 expression of our sympathy.