



HR0852

LRB096 19599 KXB 34991 r

1

HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, State Representative Monique D. Davis and the  
3 members of the Illinois House of Representatives are saddened  
4 to learn of the death of Albert W. Johnson of Chicago, who  
5 passed away on January 13, 2010; and

6           WHEREAS, Mr. Johnson, a St. Louis native, who started  
7 selling cars door to door, then went on to become General  
8 Motors' first African-American franchise owner, helped elect  
9 Chicago's first black mayor and President Barack Obama; and

10           WHEREAS, Mr. Johnson was born February 23, 1920, the son of  
11 a physician and a homemaker; he received a B.S. degree in  
12 business administration at Lincoln University in 1940 and an  
13 M.S. degree in hospital administration from the University of  
14 Chicago in 1960; he was a hospital administrator in St. Louis  
15 in 1954 when he began to sell cars part-time; even though the  
16 owner would not allow a black man on the Oldsmobile premises  
17 and insisted he only sell to blacks, Mr. Johnson was the  
18 dealership's top salesman; and

19           WHEREAS, He wanted his own dealership and had to petition  
20 the company for 15 years before getting a franchise, finally  
21 securing his own in 1967; his dealership was so successful that  
22 General Motors handed him a Cadillac dealership in 1971; Al

1 Johnson Cadillac grew and Mr. Johnson became an independent  
2 dealer the following year; and

3 WHEREAS, He moved the business to Tinley Park, helping spur  
4 a dealership row along a suburban stretch; he worked for Harold  
5 Washington's administration for \$1 a year; he founded a  
6 coalition that drafted Mr. Washington to run for mayor, and  
7 then was a major campaign contributor; Mr. Johnson also was the  
8 first large donor to Barack Obama's U.S. Senate campaign,  
9 contributing \$50,000; he was an important player in the John H.  
10 Stroger campaigns; and he was a founder of Rainbow, Operation  
11 PUSH's predecessor; and

12 WHEREAS, He married Marion E. Johnson in 1953; Mr. Johnson  
13 was chairman emeritus of the University of Illinois Center for  
14 Urban Business, College for Business Administration; he was a  
15 board member of LaRabida Children's Hospital, a member of the  
16 Executives' Club of Chicago, and the General Motors Black  
17 Dealers Advisory Board; and

18 WHEREAS, Albert Johnson is survived by his wife, Marion;  
19 his sons, Donald, Al Jr., and Antwoine; therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
21 NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we  
22 mourn, along with his family and friends, the passing of Albert

1 Johnson; and be it further

2       RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
3 presented to the family of Albert W. Johnson as a symbol of our  
4 sincere sympathy.