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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 James Webb Wagner, who passed away on January 10, 2009; and

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WHEREAS, James W. Wagner received his high school diploma from DuSable High School, his B.S. from Northwestern University, his M.A. from the University of Chicago, and his Ph.D. from Western Colorado University; and

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WHEREAS, James W. Wagner served as a Chicago Public School (CPS) teacher, Education Director at the Chicago Urban League, and positions in health planning and public health; afterwards, he served as Dean of Students at the School of Public Health at the University of Illinois for nearly 20 years; after his retirement, he worked as a consultant to non-profit organizations, but gave much of his time to his deep commitment to community and civic interests; and

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WHEREAS, James W. Wagner headed three organizations for many years, to which he was deeply devoted; due to his strong leadership, the DuSable Alumni Coalition successfully fought to keep DuSable High School open when CPS had plans to close it; he was the founding chair of the Mary Herrick Scholarship Fund, which has raised over \$200,000 for scholarships for more

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1 than 200 DuSable graduates; he also founded an organization  
2 twelve years ago that was focused on bringing jazz back to Hyde  
3 Park, which had been the center of jazz in the Midwest decades  
4 ago; with the support of the University of Chicago, Mr. Wagner  
5 and the Hyde Park Jazz Society succeeded in bringing the  
6 Checkerboard Lounge to Hyde Park and establishing the highly  
7 successful Sunday night jazz series; in September of 2008, the  
8 second annual Hyde Park Jazz Festival, co-sponsored by the Hyde  
9 Park Jazz Society, the Hyde Park Cultural Alliance, and the  
10 University of Chicago, dedicated the festival's Main Stage as  
11 the James W. Wagner Center Stage in honor of his work; and

12 WHEREAS, One of James W. Wagner's greatest joys was the  
13 election of Barack Obama as President-Elect, having been a  
14 strong supporter of his from the beginning of his political  
15 career and often saying that he never expected to see the  
16 election of an African-American in his lifetime; Mr. Wagner was  
17 a long-time civil rights activist and served as Captain of the  
18 "Green Train", which transported hundreds of Chicagoans to Dr.  
19 King's 1963 March on Washington; and

20 WHEREAS, James W. Wagner was a long time member and leader  
21 at University Church in Hyde Park; and

22 WHEREAS, Despite his great love for his many causes, James  
23 W. Wagner's greatest love was his family, which includes his

1 wife of 36 years, Almarie, and his daughters, Cecily and  
2 Cynthia; Mr. Wagner and his wife traveled extensively,  
3 including trips to Africa, Egypt, China, Peru, the Galapagos  
4 Islands, and the Caribbean; therefore, be it

5       RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL  
6 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with  
7 his family and friends, the passing of James Webb Wagner; and  
8 be it further

9       RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
10 presented to the family of James W. Wagner as an expression of  
11 our sympathy.