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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 Wanda White Gills of Chicago, who passed away on June 24, 2009; and

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WHEREAS, She was born on November 11, 1956 in Charlottesville, Virginia; she attended college at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia, St. Augustine College in Raleigh, North Carolina, and Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey; and

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WHEREAS, She served as an Assistant or Deputy Commissioner for three city departments under Chicago Mayors Harold Washington, Eugene Sawyer, and Richard M. Daley, the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training, the Department of Economic Development, and the Department of Planning and Development; she was a community based coalition builder, serving with the Community Workshop on Economic Development (CWED) and the Women's Self Employment Project (WSEP); and

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WHEREAS, She was known as the "Mother" of Chicago's award-winning Empowerment Zone planning process, working tirelessly in mobilizing low-income communities to participate in the planning process while serving as the Executive Director of CWED; after leaving CWED, she became the Development

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1 Director of the Chicago Housing Authority Transition team,
2 spearheading the Hope VI planning and implementation process
3 involving public housing residents; and

4 WHEREAS, She was an active member of Progressive Community
5 Center Church, where she served in a variety of positions,
6 including Chief Operating Officer and as a member of the Praise
7 Dance team; and

8 WHEREAS, She was preceded in death by her brother, Clarence
9 White Ragland; and

10 WHEREAS, She is survived by her husband, Elder Dr. Douglas
11 Gills; her sons, Wilbur Scott and Raymond Douglas; her
12 daughter-in-law, Raniece White; her parents, Raymond and Ethel
13 Ragland; her 3 grandchildren; her adopted sisters, Gail Burton,
14 Dionne Blackwell, and Maurice Coverson; her adopted brothers,
15 Timothy Wright, Rev. Dr. Alvin Edwards, and Fred Milton; her
16 sisters-in-law, Apostle Deborah C. Gills Kornegay and Denise
17 Eastling; and a host of aunts, uncles, nieces, and nephews;
18 therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL
20 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with
21 her family and friends, the passing of Wanda White Gills; and
22 be it further

1 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
2 presented to the family of Wanda White Gills as a symbol of our
3 sincere sympathy.