



SR0431

LRB096 15008 GRL 29948 r

1

SENATE RESOLUTION

2

WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of Father Aengus Finucane, who passed away on October 6, 2009; and

3

4

5

WHEREAS, Father Aengus Finucane was a native of County Limerick, Ireland; at a young age, he devoted his life to the Finucane family tradition of public service; and

6

7

8

WHEREAS, Father Aengus Finucane was known throughout the world for his philanthropic service; he began his lifetime of service as a young missionary with the Holy Ghost Fathers as the Parish Priest in Uli, Nigeria; during his tenure in Uli, he found himself in the midst of the bitter civil war between Nigeria and Biafra in 1968; during his time there, he literally came face to face with famine, with starving men, women, and children at his doorstep; Aengus and his brother, Father Jack Finucane, along with their colleagues from all faiths, knew that they had to act immediately and do what they could to alleviate the suffering in Biafra; and

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

WHEREAS, In response to the humanitarian crisis in Biafra, Father Aengus Finucane and his brother turned schools into refugee camps and set up food distribution centers and emergency hospitals; at the height of the crisis in the summer

20

21

22

1 of 1968, an estimated 6,000 children were dying every week due
2 to lack of food and medicine; to aid in their efforts, Aengus
3 and his brother turned to their home country to raise awareness
4 of the seriousness of the famine; the response from the people
5 of Ireland was extraordinary, with relief supplies flown in
6 from Ireland every night on the Uli parish's newly expanded
7 emergency airstrip; thanks to the efforts of Aengus and his
8 brother, hundreds of thousands of refugees caught in the
9 conflict were given critical aid in their times of need; and

10 WHEREAS, As a result of Father Aengus Finucane's
11 intervention in the Biafra war zone, the humanitarian
12 organization, Concern Worldwide was born; for the next 30
13 years, Aengus worked among and fought for the poorest of the
14 poor in conflict zones, disasters, and famines; he lived in and
15 traveled to the world's poorest countries, including Ethiopia,
16 Bangladesh, Cambodia, Uganda, and Rwanda, where he witnessed
17 the horrors of the Rwandan civil war firsthand; and

18 WHEREAS, In 1981, Father Aengus Finucane became Chief
19 Executive of Concern Worldwide; he held the post until 1997,
20 when he came to the United States to set up Concern Worldwide
21 US; he then served as Honorary President of Concern Worldwide
22 US until his passing; during his tenure at Concern Worldwide
23 US, he worked alongside Executive Director Siobhan Walsh and
24 Chairman Tom Moran to build the organization from a small team

1 of 4 to an organized group of 25 that raises millions of
2 dollars to support Concern's work in the field; and

3 WHEREAS, Father Aengus Finucane will be remembered fondly
4 by countless people in Ireland, the U.S., and the many places
5 around the world that benefited from his generosity and
6 compassion; his work with Concern saved innumerable lives and
7 improved the quality of life for millions of people; his
8 message of unity and caring make him a role model for the
9 people of the State of Illinois, the citizens of our nation,
10 and the world at large; therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL
12 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with
13 his family and friends, the passing of Father Aengus Finucane;
14 and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
16 presented to the family of Father Aengus Finucane as an
17 expression of our sympathy.