



HR0164

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of Jerry B.
4 Symons of Jacksonville, former owner of WLDS-WEAI radio
5 stations, who passed away on March 11, 2013; and

6 WHEREAS, Jerry Symons was born on August 17, 1942, in
7 Jacksonville to James Lyndall and Pauline Barton Symons; he
8 graduated in 1960 from Jacksonville High School, where he was
9 class president, and from Illinois College in 1964, where he
10 was a member and past president of Sigma Pi; he married Sharon
11 Baker on August 28, 1964, at Central Christian Church in
12 Jacksonville; he joined the Air National Guard in 1966 and
13 attended Officer's Candidate School with the U.S. Air Force in
14 San Antonio, Texas, where he achieved the rank of Second
15 Lieutenant in 1967; he served as a member of the Illinois Air
16 National Guard (183rd Tactical Fighter Group) for almost 25
17 years, retiring in December of 1990 with the rank of Lt.
18 Colonel; and

19 WHEREAS, Jerry Symons began his radio career in 1961 while
20 a student at Illinois College; he spent the next 51 years
21 working for WLDS/WEAI Radio; he was a deejay from 1961-1964,
22 news director from 1964-1981, and station manager from
23 1981-1989; in 1989, he formed Jerdon Broadcasting with his

1 friend and partner, Don Hamilton, to purchase the stations; he
2 served as co-owner and general manager until the stations were
3 sold in July of 2008; he continued to serve as consultant and
4 sports director, a position he has held since 1964; and

5 WHEREAS, Jerry Symons was a dedicated volunteer and devoted
6 hours to the betterment of his community; he took part in
7 special projects and speaking engagements at schools and other
8 organizations, chaired a mayoral advisory committee that
9 resulted in the creation of Community Park and the Jacksonville
10 Area Chamber of Commerce office, and co-chaired a successful
11 campaign to achieve Home Rule status for the City of
12 Jacksonville; in addition, he was a member and past president
13 of the Jacksonville Kiwanis Club, where he was named
14 Distinguished Kiwanian in 2002 and a Hixson Fellow in 2005, a
15 former director and past president of Passavant Hospital, a
16 former trustee for Illinois College, a former chairman of the
17 West Central Illinois All-Star Basketball Classic, a former
18 founding member of the Morgan County Sheriff's Merit
19 Commission, a past president of the Committee for the
20 Advancement of Higher Education, and a former director of the
21 Jacksonville Area Chamber of Commerce; and

22 WHEREAS, Jerry Symons was a life-long member of Central
23 Christian Church, where he served as chairman of the General
24 Board, Deacon, Elder, and treasurer of the Board of Trustees;

1 he was a devotee of youth baseball and coached Elks Youth
2 Baseball and Pony-Colt League Baseball for many years, where he
3 was recognized for 17 years of service as the Pony-Colt League
4 treasurer; he most recently served on the Jacksonville Public
5 School Foundation Board of Directors, the Jacksonville Sports
6 Hall of Fame Committee, and the Jacksonville Regional Economic
7 Development Council; and

8 WHEREAS, Jerry Symons, known to the community as the voice
9 of the Jacksonville Crimson, was named to the Jacksonville
10 High School Hall of Fame and the Illinois Basketball Coaches
11 Association Hall of Fame; he was twice awarded the
12 Distinguished Service Award from the Illinois High School
13 Association and received the Silver Dome Award for
14 Sportscasting from the Illinois Broadcasters Association; he
15 was also the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award at
16 Illinois College and the Friend of Education Award from the
17 Jacksonville Education Association; and

18 WHEREAS, Jerry Symons was preceded in death by his parents;
19 his aunt, Martha Symons; and his mother-in-law, Mary Baker; and

20 WHEREAS, Jerry Symons is survived by his wife, Sharon; his
21 daughter, Amy Jackson (Edward); his son, Stephen Symons
22 (Cammie); his grandchildren, Molly, Grace and Ben Jackson, and
23 Amelia and Cody Symons; his siblings, James Symons (Judy),

1 Andrew Symons (Linda), Jennifer Symons, and Alan Symons
2 (Valerie); his several nieces and nephews; and his
3 sister-in-law, Julie Watanabe (Brent); therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
5 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
6 we mourn the passing of Jerry Symons, and we extend our sincere
7 condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved
8 him; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
10 presented to the family of Jerry Symons as an expression of our
11 deepest sympathy.