



SR0176

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1 SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to
3 learn of the death of Ernie Russell; and

4 WHEREAS, Ernie Russell was born on July 20, 1938, in
5 Peoria; his parents were Earl W. and Mary Jane Moore Russell;
6 he married Sara Warrington in Peoria in 1961; and

7 WHEREAS, Ernie Russell was raised in Lacon and graduated
8 from Mid-County High School in Varna; and

9 WHEREAS, Ernie Russell served in the United States Navy at
10 the Naval Hospital in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania as a corpsman
11 from 1956 to 1959; and

12 WHEREAS, Ernie Russell earned his bachelor's degree in
13 political science from Illinois State University in 1973 and
14 his master's degree in public administration from Sangamon
15 State University in 1975; he also earned his associate's degree
16 in fire science from Illinois Central College; and

17 WHEREAS, Ernie Russell was a proud member of the Peoria
18 Firefighters IAFF Local 50 before being promoted through the
19 ranks to the Peoria Fire Department Administration; he
20 ultimately served as Chief of the Peoria Fire Department; and

1 WHEREAS, Ernie Russell served as the city liaison during
2 the construction of the Fire Training Academy on Galena Road
3 and the construction of the Fire Central Station at Bryant and
4 Monroe in Peoria; he served as Training Chief and Fire
5 Prevention Chief during his tenure; he was named Chief of the
6 Peoria Fire Department in 1994, where he remained until 2001,
7 when he was appointed to the position of State Fire Marshal by
8 the Governor of Illinois; he subsequently worked for many years
9 as a consultant with Resource Management Associates of Tinley
10 Park before being hired as the interim Fire Chief of the
11 Village of Oak Lawn in August of 2008, where he served through
12 July of 2009; he later served as the interim Fire Chief in
13 Canton from November of 2010 through June of 2011; and

14 WHEREAS, In October 2011, Ernie Russell was honored with
15 the title of Fire Chief Emeritus; this title is reserved for
16 retired chiefs who have had distinguished careers and who have
17 made significant contributions that set them apart from their
18 peers; and

19 WHEREAS, Ernie Russell ran for election in the Illinois
20 State Senate in the 46th District in 2006; and

21 WHEREAS, Ernie Russell served on numerous boards and
22 committees in Peoria, including the American Red Cross and the

1 Boys and Girls Club of Peoria, where he also served as
2 president; and

3 WHEREAS, Ernie Russell was a board member of the Peoria
4 Area Labor Management Council and invested much of his
5 professional career fostering relationships between labor and
6 management to provide topnotch emergency services not only in
7 Peoria, but in communities across Illinois, making Illinois a
8 safer place to live; and

9 WHEREAS, Ernie Russell is survived by his wife, Sara; his
10 daughters, Kelley Russell and Joan Ott; his sons-in-law, Bill
11 Ott and Jay Duke; his granddaughters, Katherine Taylor Duke and
12 Isabella Maree Ott; his grandson, Jeremy Russell Ott; his
13 brothers, Raymond Russell and Robert (Jackie) Grieves; his
14 sisters, Crystal Russell and Melody Grieves; and his many
15 cousins, nieces, and nephews; therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL
17 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with
18 his family and friends, the passing of Ernie Russell; and be it
19 further

20 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
21 presented to the family of Ernie Russell as an expression of
22 our sympathy.