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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 Roger Ebert, film critic for the Chicago Sun-Times for the past 46 years, who passed away on April 4, 2013; and

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WHEREAS, Roger Ebert joined the Sun-Times in 1966 and became the paper's movie reviewer the following year in 1967; his reviews were eventually syndicated to several hundred other newspapers nationwide; and

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WHEREAS, Roger Ebert received a Pulitzer Prize in 1975 for distinguished criticism—the first, and one of only 3, given to a film reviewer since the category was created in 1970; in 2005, he became the first critic to have a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame; and

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WHEREAS, Roger Ebert's television career began in 1975, first in the Chicago area and then nationwide on PBS, when he and Gene Siskel co-hosted the show "Opening Soon at a Theater Near You"; the show was renamed "Sneak Previews", "At the Movies", and eventually "Siskel & Ebert & The Movies", at which point the signature "thumbs up, thumbs down" rating system began; and

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1 WHEREAS, Roger Ebert authored over 20 books covering the
2 film industry and branched out into screenplays; in 1969 he was
3 the co-writer of the movie "Beyond the Valley of the Dolls", a
4 film that has since achieved cult status; and

5 WHEREAS, Roger Ebert founded the annual Ebertfest Film
6 Festival in 1999, which holds its 15th incarnation April 17-21,
7 2013, at the Virginia Theatre in Champaign; and

8 WHEREAS, Roger Ebert was a renowned author, journalist,
9 film historian, film critic, and screenwriter; he received
10 honorary degrees from the American Film Institute, the
11 University of Colorado, and the School of the Art Institute; he
12 is a member of the Chicago Journalism Hall of Fame and was
13 honored with a sidewalk medallion under the Chicago Theatre
14 marquee; and

15 WHEREAS, Roger Ebert was born in Urbana on June 18, 1942,
16 to Annabel and Walter H. Ebert; he attended Urbana High School
17 and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, graduating in
18 1964; he spent a year at the University of Cape Town in South
19 Africa before attending the University of Chicago; he married
20 Charlie "Chaz" Hammelsmith in 1992; and

21 WHEREAS, Roger Ebert is survived by his wife; his
22 stepchildren, Sonia and Jay; and his grandchildren, Raven,

1 Emil, Mark, and Joseph; therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL
3 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
4 Roger Ebert, and extend our sincere condolences to his family,
5 friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
7 presented to the family of Roger Ebert as an expression of our
8 deepest sympathy.