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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 Bruce Edward Saur of East Peoria, who passed away on July 10, 2014; and

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WHEREAS, Bruce Saur was born on July 9, 1926 in Peoria to Edward and Gertrude Marie (nee Ambrose) Saur; he graduated from Peoria High School in 1944 and Bradley University in 1949, where he was a member of the Sigma Chi Fraternity; he served in the United States Army Air Forces from 1945 to 1946, stationed in Wiesbaden, Germany; he also served in the Illinois Air National Guard, 169th Fighter Squadron from 1951 to 1954; he married Norma Bloom on October 17, 1952; after her passing he married Mary Whitman on June 10, 1999; after her passing he married Rebecca Williams on June 16, 2012; and

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WHEREAS, While still a student at Bradley University, Bruce Saur coached Peoria's Lee Grade School to 4 city basketball titles against much larger schools; in 1951, he helped establish the first Little League Baseball program in Peoria, and, in 1955, he acted as a scout for the Pittsburgh Pirates and was responsible for them signing Peoria's own Leon Hurst; and

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WHEREAS, For 6 years, starting in 1949, Bruce Saur was a

1 teacher at Peoria High School, where he also was an assistant
2 basketball coach and head baseball coach; he entered the
3 automobile industry in 1956 as a salesman, and by 1961, had
4 worked his way up to general sales manager; in 1963, he went to
5 work for Lynn Velde and became a partner in Velde Ford in 1965;
6 they purchased Arnold Ford in Vero Beach, Florida in 1976; the
7 partners started Velde Lincoln Volvo of Peoria in 1984, which
8 was followed by Velde Cadillac Buick GMC in 1987; Bruce later
9 opened the Corner Store on Main Street and Bruce Saur's Black
10 Rabbit bar, both in Downtown Peoria; and

11 WHEREAS, Bruce Saur saved professional hockey in Peoria
12 not once but twice, starting in 1989 with his purchase of the
13 Rivermen from the city of Peoria; in 1996, he and a partner
14 started an International Hockey League (IHL) franchise in San
15 Antonio, Texas; both were manifestations of his lifelong love
16 of athletics; he owned 2 professional hockey teams in 4
17 different leagues over 20 years; the Rivermen won the IHL's
18 Turner Cup in 1991, along the way setting a professional hockey
19 record with 18 consecutive wins; the Rivermen also earned an
20 East Coast Hockey League title in 2000; the Peoria Rivermen
21 player who exemplifies commitment and leadership both on and
22 off the ice now receives the Bruce E. Saur Leadership Award,
23 and each Rivermen home opener is designated Bruce Saur Hockey
24 Night; and

1 WHEREAS, Among his many honors, Bruce SaurS was a recipient
2 of the Neve Harms Meritorious Service to Sports Award and the
3 United Cerebral Palsy Community Service Award, and he was
4 inducted into the Greater Peoria Sports Hall of Fame in 1996;
5 he was a recipient of Bradley's Distinguished Alumnus Award and
6 was named to the university's elite Centurion Society; he
7 chaired the Salvation Army's Tree of Lights campaign, and he
8 was grand marshal of Peoria's 2013 Santa Claus Parade; he was
9 also a member of the Pekin and Mount Hawley country clubs and
10 the Country Club of Peoria; and

11 WHEREAS, Bruce SaurS was preceded in death by his first
12 wife, Norma, and by his second wife, Mary; and

13 WHEREAS, Bruce SaurS is survived by his wife, Rebecca; his
14 sons, Michael SaurS, Tim (Lori) SaurS, and Scott (Suzette)
15 SaurS; his grandchildren, Lynzie (Luke) Gruden, Stacie (Mike)
16 Swingle, and Ryan (fiancee, Tara Kulkarni) SaurS; his
17 great-grandchildren, Brady, Owen, and Gibby Gruden and Selah
18 and Maya Swingle; his 2 stepsons, Brian (Elizabeth) Morris and
19 Jason (Catherine) Morris; his step-grandchildren, Levi,
20 Adeline, and James Morris; and his beloved dog, Coco;
21 therefore, be it

22 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL
23 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of

1 Bruce Edward Saur, and extend our sincere condolences to his
2 family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it
3 further

4 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
5 presented to the family of Bruce Saur as an expression of our
6 deepest sympathy.