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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 Dr.
4 Carrie Louise Filer Ellis Davis; and

5 WHEREAS, Dr. Davis was born 91 years ago in Marianna,
6 Arkansas to Vera and Squire Filer; she attended Moten
7 Elementary and was a member of St. Luke African Methodist
8 Episcopal Church; she was valedictorian of her high school
9 class at Robert Moten High School and graduated cum laude from
10 Arkansas AM & N (now the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff),
11 where she joined her beloved Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority,
12 Incorporated; while at Arkansas AM & N, she was an accomplished
13 member of the basketball team and was entrusted to work in the
14 President's office; she had the distinguished honor of being
15 the first, and for a time, the only female on the university's
16 winning varsity debate team; she was the winner of the Scipio
17 A. Jones Oratorical Contest and won the Outstanding Actress
18 Award; she was crowned both "Miss Omega" of Omega Psi Phi
19 Fraternity, Incorporated and "Miss Arkansas State" Campus
20 Queen; after attending Arkansas AM & N, she attended
21 Northwestern University and Northeastern University, where she
22 received her Master of Arts; she earned her doctoral degree
23 from the University of Sarasota, where she graduated with
24 honors; she later taught other doctoral candidates and was a

1 member of the Board of Trustees of the University of Sarasota;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, Dr. Davis taught at Robert Moten High School in
4 Marianna, Arkansas for 7 years; she was the first classroom
5 teacher to ever deliver the Keynote Address at the State of
6 Arkansas Teachers' Meeting at the capitol in Little Rock; and

7 WHEREAS, Dr. Davis left Arkansas for Chicago, she became a
8 member of Greater Institutional AME Church for a few years, but
9 the historic Quinn Chapel AME Church was her church home for
10 over 50 years; she was the co-director and a teacher at Crest
11 Modeling/Talent Agency for 4 years and was a certified teacher
12 of Speech, Drama, and English and a high school counselor at
13 Englewood High School; she served as coordinator of Human
14 Relations, Instructional Services, and as an Administrator in
15 Districts 27 and 19 for the Chicago Board of Education; and

16 WHEREAS, Dr. Davis designed and coordinated numerous
17 programs for her school districts, including the Communication
18 Arts Festival involving Chicago Public School students
19 competing in oral interpretation, public speaking and drama,
20 the Deb Tea for Talent - a talent competition in the district
21 elementary schools, the Great Debates-skill building/thinking
22 for high school students, Spellarama - a Spelling Bee conducted
23 for elementary school students, the Academic Showdown - a

1 knowledge-based contest similar to Jeopardy, and an annual
2 essay contest for Chicago elementary and high school students;
3 these creations became extremely successful under her tutelage
4 and some developed into city-wide activities and contests open
5 to all Chicago Public School students; and

6 WHEREAS, Dr. Davis was also a private drama coach for
7 students and adults wishing to improve their public speaking
8 skills for competition or career enhancement; she was the
9 designer, writer, and teacher of the course for Chicago
10 teachers in speech, drama, music, dance, reading, and classroom
11 management; she as a poet and the author of "Carrie's Vignette"
12 - a newsletter and she co-authored the "Drama Curriculum Guide"
13 for the high schools of Chicago and the Proficiency Skills
14 Course-Language Arts Portion for the Chicago Board of
15 Education; she was the Executive Producer, co-host, and script
16 writer for FOCUS ON YOUTH, a WLNR radio show; the City of
17 Chicago Board of Education awarded her Outstanding Drama
18 Director and Teacher of the Year; after retiring from the
19 Chicago Board of Education, she returned as an educational
20 consultant on the Probation Team for Troubled Schools; and

21 WHEREAS, Dr. Davis continuously reached out to make this
22 world a better place with her civic activities; she served as
23 Chairman of United Charities Calumet Family Center Advisory
24 Committee, as President of the Roseland Community Hospital

1 Auxiliary, as Committee Chairperson for Afro-American Family
2 and Community Services Development, as member of the White
3 House Conference for Youth, as member of the Good Citizenship
4 Club, as board member of the Altgeld Urban Program Center, as
5 board member of the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, and was a
6 delegate for the General Conference of the AME Church and Quinn
7 Chapel; and

8 WHEREAS, Dr. Davis was a Legendary Soror and Leader of
9 Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Incorporated; she chartered the Alpha
10 Chi Chapter at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff in
11 1948, served as Basileus of Delta Sigma Chapter in Chicago, was
12 Central Region Campus Coordinator, served as the 11th Central
13 Region Syntaktes from 1974 to 1978, was elected Grand
14 Epistoleus from 1980 to 1984, was a National Board Member, Dean
15 of Pledgees, and Chairperson of the following committees:
16 Debutante Tea, Miss Black Teenage Pageant, National
17 Scholarship, Regional Scholarship and Nominating Committee;
18 her public speaking passion was further realized through the
19 Kaleidoscope of the Arts - a talent search involving Sigma
20 Gamma Rho Sorority's high school Rhoers and college Sigma women
21 competing for trophies in speech, drama, and dance; as Grand
22 Epistoleus, she authored IN TOUCH, a newsletter to all Sorors
23 and WRITE ON, a publication containing Media Hints for
24 Epistolei; her originated the "Mother-Daughter Gallery" which
25 spotlighted daughters who followed their mother's legacy into

1 Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority; she was a founding member of Eta Xi
2 Sigma Chapter in Oak Lawn; devotion to Sigma is a family affair
3 as her's sister Vivian and all 3 of her daughters are members
4 of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Incorporated; and

5 WHEREAS, On November 18, 1978, Dr. Davis journeyed with
6 others to Chicago to help charter the second chapter of the
7 National Women of Achievement, Incorporated (NWOA); she became
8 the first President of the Chicago Chapter; under her
9 leadership, membership increased from 5 to 35, in a relatively
10 short time; she worked tirelessly to continue the promulgation
11 of progress for growth of the organization; she initiated the
12 NWOA Pageant that focuses on outstanding Achievers, organized
13 the "GEMS", a youth group later named Youth Achievers, and
14 organized the oratorical contest for youth; in 1985, she became
15 the Second National President of NWOA; the numbers of chapters
16 of NWOA more than doubled under her leadership; she enhanced
17 the financial status of the national coffers through contests
18 among chapters, focusing on the outstanding Presidents; her
19 innovations were youth competitions in debates, public
20 speaking, and oral interpretation; young ladies and men won
21 financial rewards for outstanding performances; leadership
22 seminars were devised for officers and members of local
23 chapters and thousands of dollars were given to worthy students
24 as grants and scholarship to provide avenues for further study;
25 numerous achievers and community leaders were given awards

1 through the Profiles of Prominence Ceremony each year; she
2 designed a replica of NWOA'S gem stone into a beautiful award
3 for these recipients; additionally, she established the
4 Achiever Carrie Filer Davis Award to be presented to the
5 Regional Director who had excelled during the 2 year period
6 leading up to CON WOA, the National Convention; and

7 WHEREAS, Dr. Davis's numerous honors and recognitions
8 include: being honored by Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton in
9 Recognition for Distinguished Accomplishments and Excellence
10 in Education; the Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. 80th
11 Anniversary Pearl Award; the United Charities 20 Years of
12 Service Award; Mayor Daley's City of Chicago Senior Citizen
13 Hall of Fame; the National Women of Achievement, Inc. Hall of
14 Fame Award; National Women of Achievement, Inc.-Youth Activity
15 of the Year; Outstanding Service to Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority,
16 Inc. Delta Sigma; Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.-Bicentennial
17 Festival; the Roseland Community Hospital Community Award; the
18 En Verite Progressive Charity Club-Progressive Black Women's
19 Award; the National Women of Achievement, Inc.-"The Diamond
20 Award"; the National Award for Outstanding Dramatic
21 Contribution to the Field of Speech and Drama-the Vivian Tate
22 Hegwood Award; Altgeld CSC Advisory Council Award for
23 Outstanding and Dedicated Service; University of Sarasota Hall
24 of Fame Award; the Roseland Community Hospital Commitment to
25 Volunteerism Award; the Project Reassurance Award; the Sigma

1 Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. Psi Sigma Chapter-Community
2 Service/Founder's Day Award; the Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.
3 Gamma Pi Sigma-Recognition of Support Award; the National Women
4 of Achievement, Inc.-Second Annual Profiles of Prominence
5 Award; Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. Eta Xi Sigma-In
6 Appreciation of Dedicated Service, Leadership, and Commitment;
7 the Moton Hall of Fame Award; the Lamplighters Club of Greater
8 Institutional A.M.E. Church-Outstanding Qualities of Humility,
9 Loyalty, Spiritual Dedication, High Academic Pursuits, and
10 Unselfish Devotion; Calumet Advisory Committee-Sincere
11 Appreciation for Years of Service and Many Contributions; Sigma
12 Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. Rho Sigma Chapter's Founders' Day
13 Luncheon-Outstanding and Dedicated Service to the Sorority and
14 to the Community; Who's Who in Black America; Sigma Gamma Rho
15 Sorority, Inc. Delta Sigma Chapter-In Appreciation for
16 Dedication and Services to the Central Region as Regional
17 Syntaktes; Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. Delta Sigma
18 Chapter-In Appreciation for Dedicated Service as Basileus; the
19 Humanitarian Award in Education for the establishment of a
20 school in honor of her mother, Vera Burchett Filer, an educator
21 for over 35 Years; the Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. Delta
22 Sigma Chapter-Black History Month Recognition Award; Service
23 to Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.; Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority,
24 Inc. Eta Xi Sigma Chapter Basileus Thweatt-Pippion Thank You
25 for Special Efforts and Continued Support; the University of
26 Sarasota Campus Dedication Award; National Women of

1 Achievement, Inc. Houston Cluster Chapters In Appreciation for
2 Dedicated and Loyal Service, Seventh Anniversary CON-WOA; the
3 Chicago Public Schools Local School Council Inaugural Award;
4 National Women of Achievement, Inc.-In Appreciation for
5 Service as Midwest Regional Director; LeMoyne-Owen College
6 Alumni Association, Chicago Chapter In Grateful Appreciation;
7 National Women of Achievement, Inc. First National President's
8 Award-In Recognition of Outstanding Achievement in Education,
9 Speech Arts, and Community Service; the UNCF School
10 Campaign-Recognition Award for Outstanding Service; the Sigma
11 Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. Hall of Fame Award; Sub-District 9
12 Council-In Recognition of Excellence as Parliamentarian;
13 National Women of Achievement, Inc.-Life Member Award; the
14 National Woman of Achievement, Inc. Chicago
15 Chapter-Outstanding Service Award; the Outstanding Service to
16 the Community-Human Services Award; the National Women of
17 Achievement, Inc. Manderline Scales Scholarship Award, 17th
18 Biennial CON-WOA; the Outstanding Administrator Award from the
19 State of Illinois for Those Who Excel in Administration;
20 National Women of Achievement, Inc. 10th Biennial CON-WOA-In
21 Appreciation of Outstanding Service; the National Women of
22 Achievement, Inc. Chicago Chapter-Wind Beneath Our Wings
23 Achiever Award; and the National Women of Achievement, Inc.
24 13th Biennial CON-WOA Coordinators Award; and

25 WHEREAS, Dr. Davis was preceded in death by her parents;

1 her sister, Bessie Filer Edwards; her sister, Gayle Filer
2 Manley; and her brother, Macy Dean Filer; and

3 WHEREAS, Dr. Davis is survived by her daughters, Norma
4 Louise Ellis Olya Bush, Helen Davis Gardner, M.D., and Gina
5 Renee Davis, Esq.; her sister, Vivian Filer Branton; her
6 sister-in-law, Blondell Burson Filer; her grandchildren,
7 Taurin Ellis Penn (Corey), Walter Forrest Bush, IV (Sandy),
8 Tiffany Latrice Renea Ellis, Kossie Gardner III, and Najee
9 Squire Gino Olya; her great-grandchildren, Sarah Penn-Cox,
10 Sydney Penn, and Javion and Asia Bush; her
11 great-great-grandchildren, London Marie and Paris Simone Cox;
12 her very special niece, Tamera Thompson Fair; her children in
13 her heart, Art Norman, JoAnne Hawkins White, Lynn A. Norment,
14 Donald K. Johnson, and Deborah A. Rountree; her nieces and
15 nephews around the country; Sorors; Achievers; former
16 students; and friends all over the world; therefore, be it

17 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
18 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
19 mourn the passing of Dr. Carrie Louise Filer Ellis Davis, and
20 extend our sincere condolences to her family, friends, and all
21 who knew and loved her; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
23 presented to the family of Dr. Davis as an expression of our

1 deepest sympathy.