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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 George Washington Collins, who passed away on July 31, 2014; and

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WHEREAS, George Collins was born in Bennettsville, South Carolina on October 14, 1926 to Bishop W.C. and Elizabeth (nee McCall) Collins; he attended Laurinburg Normal and Industrial Institute, in Laurinburg, North Carolina; he served in the United States Army Air Corps, achieving the rank of Sergeant; and

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WHEREAS, Upon being discharged in 1947, George Collins began working as a reporter for The People's Voice; he later joined the Afro-American Newspapers in Baltimore, Maryland, where he covered such historical events as the March on Washington and the assassination of President Kennedy; his award-winning coverage included many events in the 1960s Civil Rights Movement and he was a tenacious investigative reporter bringing justice to corrupt public officials; he garnered national recognition for his coverage of the funerals of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy in 1968; he worked as an anchor and associate editor at WMAR-TV 2 News, where he established himself as the first African-American television journalist in Baltimore; during his 20-year, he was

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1 an executive producer, investigative reporter, political  
2 analyst, and editorial director; his programs looked at  
3 substantive issues in the black community; he spent last decade  
4 of his career as host of @Issue, a live, one-hour weekly  
5 program on Morgan State University Radio, WEAA-88.9 FM, that  
6 explored provocative issues having both a direct and indirect  
7 impact on the quality of life as seen through the Black  
8 Experience; and

9 WHEREAS, In 2003, George Collins was jointly cited by the  
10 Library of America, the National Committee for Excellence in  
11 Journalism, and the Smithsonian Institution as "one of the best  
12 American journalists of the 20th century"; and

13 WHEREAS, George Collins was a member of the New Shiloh  
14 Baptist Church for 41 years; and

15 WHEREAS, George Collins was preceded in death by his  
16 parents; and

17 WHEREAS, George Collins is survived by his wife of over 65  
18 years, Eloise Ross Collins; his 4 children, Barbara C. Rhodes  
19 (Warren), Ronald B. Collins (Sylvia), Vanessa C. Pyatt (James),  
20 and Valerie D. Collins; his 4 grandchildren, Mandisa A.  
21 Rhodes-Trower (Christopher), Zachary P. Collins, Vashti E.  
22 Pyatt, and Tabitha D. Pyatt; his great-grandchild, Khadijah A.

1 Trower; his 4 brothers, David C. Collins, Benjamin F. Collins,  
2 Bishop Floyd D. Collins (Barbara), and Nathaniel N. Collins;  
3 his 2 sisters-in-law, Annie Collins and Leah Collins; and a  
4 host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends; therefore, be it

5       RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL  
6 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
7 George Washington Collins, and extend our sincere condolences  
8 to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be  
9 it further

10       RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
11 presented to the family of George Collins as an expression of  
12 our deepest sympathy.