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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 William Raymond "Bill" Prather of Chillicothe, who passed away on April 20, 2015; and

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WHEREAS, Bill Prather was born in Peoria on July 1, 1932 to Claude Raymond and Helen (nee Burkey) Prather; he attended school in Chillicothe; he married Gloria Haddad on December 31, 1954; he later married Evelyn Morris on October 1, 1976; and

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WHEREAS, For several years, Bill Prather was a truck driver for Nerad Oil, Sinclair, Texaco, and Brewers Distributing; later he owned and operated U-Lok Storage and Bee-J Amusements; and

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WHEREAS, Bill Prather's true passion was in politics and he spent most of his life in public service; he served the community of Chillicothe for more than 40 years; he served as the Chillicothe Township Road Commissioner for 38 1/2 years; since 2010, he served as a Chillicothe Township Trustee; he served as President, past President, 1st Vice-President, 2nd Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Director of the Township Officials of Illinois over the years, beginning in 1982; since 1970, he served as Democrat Precinct Committeeman for Chillicothe Precinct 7; he also was the Chairman of the

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1 Peoria County Democratic Central Committee for 16 years,
2 beginning in 1992; he served on the Peoria County Board for
3 more than 34 years, representing Districts 1, 13, and 15, and
4 he served as Chairman from 2007 to 2008; upon his retirement
5 from the County Board, State Rep. David Leitch presented him
6 with a proclamation for his years of service to the county; the
7 County Board thereafter appointed him as a Trustee for the
8 Greater Chillicothe Sanitary District; and

9 WHEREAS, Bill Prather co-founded Ambulance Rescue 33, an
10 originally all-volunteer ambulance service, and was a charter
11 member of the Chillicothe Claud-Elen Days, which he and his
12 parents created to support Ambulance Rescue 33; Claud-Elen Days
13 is now in its 49th year and has grown to assist many other
14 local organizations; since 1969, he worked for Shriners
15 Hospitals for Crippled Children and was a permanent
16 contributing member; he was a Noble of the Mystic Shrine in the
17 Mohammed Temple of Peoria and was a member of the 100 Million
18 Dollar Club; he was a member of numerous other clubs and
19 organizations, including the Hanna City Sportsman's Club, the
20 El Hajj Peoria Caravanserai No. 6, Chillicothe Jaycees, the
21 Peoria Casting Club, the St. Patrick Society, the Chillicothe
22 Twin City REACT Team, and the United States Chamber of
23 Commerce; and

24 WHEREAS, Throughout his years in public service, Bill

1 Prather received numerous awards and achievements; he received
2 Peoria County Township Highway Commissioner Appreciation
3 awards; he was chosen as the Chillicothe Rotary Club Citizen of
4 the Year in 1979 and received the Outstanding Service to the
5 Taxpayers of Peoria County Award 4 times, in 1982, 1984, 1988,
6 and 1998; in 1982, he earned the Vice-Chairman Reapportionment
7 Committee Award for his assistance with district
8 reapportionment; also in 1982, he earned the Chillicothe Area
9 Chamber of Commerce Award for Outstanding Contributions to the
10 Community; in 1983, he received the Citizen Participation Award
11 from the Community Workshop and Training Center; in 1985, he
12 received the Betty Osborne Award for his efforts in furthering
13 feminist goals and ideals; in 1993, the Peoria County Fraternal
14 Order of Police Lodge 157 recognized him as a "Shop with a Cop"
15 sponsor; he received the Distinguished Service Award for 17
16 years of service to the Highway Commissioner's Division of
17 Township Officials of Illinois, from 1982 to 1999; in 2002, the
18 Marty Gollnitz Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4999 presented him
19 with an award for his many years of service; in 2004, he
20 received the President's Award from the Township Officials of
21 Illinois, the highest award given to one township official in
22 the State each year; in 2007, he received the Charles C.
23 Schlink Memorial Award for Good Government from the Chillicothe
24 Jaycees; in 2014, he received the Award Medal of St. Paul from
25 the Bishop of the Diocese of Quincy; and

1 WHEREAS, Bill Prather enjoyed spending time with his family
2 and friends, driving along the Illinois River, traveling,
3 collecting antique clocks and jukeboxes, collecting coins, and
4 eating almost any "fried" food; he traveled to Washington, D.C.
5 on numerous occasions and was twice invited to the White House
6 by President Jimmy Carter and President George W. Bush; and

7 WHEREAS, Bill Prather was preceded in death by his first
8 wife, Gloria; his second wife, Evelyn; his parents; and his
9 sister, Patricia Wilson; and

10 WHEREAS, Bill Prather is survived by his daughter, Rhonda
11 Prather-Tank; his 2 sons, William "Pat" Prather and Neil
12 Prather; his step-son, John Morris; and his 3 grandchildren,
13 Ryan Tank, Nathaniel Prather, and Nicholas Prather; therefore,
14 be it

15 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL
16 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
17 William Raymond "Bill" Prather, and extend our sincere
18 condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved
19 him; and be it further

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