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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 Michael Edward Banks, Sr. of Chicago, who passed away on August 25, 2015; and

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WHEREAS, Michael Banks was born on June 4, 1945 in Chicago; his parents were Edward Caldwell Banks and Pauline Pruitt Banks; and

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WHEREAS, Michael Banks attended Chicago Public Schools, where he distinguished himself as an athlete and a scholar by graduating 2 years early from Harlan High School and receiving accolades and awards in basketball and track; he set a city of Chicago record in the long jump, a record that remained untouched for decades; his prowess in track earned him a dinner with Olympian Jessie Owens, which was an evening he never forgot; and

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WHEREAS, Michael Banks attended Bradley University on an athletic scholarship and joined the Epsilon Kappa Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.; he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Business and Education and joined the professional staff of Bradley University; and

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WHEREAS, During his tenure at Bradley University, Michael

1 Banks served in several capacities; he was responsible for the  
2 Men's Residence Halls, Fraternity Affairs, and Minority  
3 Student Affairs; he served as Assistant Dean of Men and  
4 Assistant to the Dean of Students; he was the founder of the  
5 Black Studies and Cultural Arts Center while serving as  
6 Assistant Dean of Students; he also founded Music with A  
7 Message, Peoria's first minority news, information, and  
8 entertainment radio broadcast, which ran from 1968 to 1993; and

9 WHEREAS, While at Bradley University, Michael Banks'  
10 passion for social and economic justice took wings; he led a  
11 group of students on a march down Main Street to call attention  
12 to discrimination in housing; he also traveled extensively on  
13 the African continent in Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia, Uganda, and  
14 Liberia as a fundraiser for African Independence Groups  
15 associated with Nelson Mandela; and

16 WHEREAS, Michael Banks served as the Executive Director of  
17 Peoria's Citizen's Committee for Economic Opportunity, Inc., a  
18 position he held for nearly 20 years; under his leadership,  
19 many programs were initiated, including Webster Head Start, day  
20 care services, kindergarten, before and after school latch-key  
21 programming, alcohol rehabilitation services, a Senior Drop In  
22 Center, neighborhood outreach centers, information and  
23 referral services, radio and television programming,  
24 weatherization and housing rehabilitation services, and a food

1 service operation; he initiated Community Economic Development  
2 projects for PCCEO, Inc. and formed the Peoria Economic  
3 Development Association, a local SBA development corporation;  
4 he started a 40-acre farm co-op that once served 100 families;  
5 he also served as President of the National Center for  
6 Community Action and as president of the Illinois Community  
7 Action Association; he was recognized by his peers for his  
8 strong leadership skills and effective management style; and

9 WHEREAS, Michael Banks played an integral role in  
10 establishing the first black owned and operated radio station  
11 in Peoria, WBGE 92.3 FM; he also served as General Manager of  
12 B&G Broadcasting, one of 250 black owned and operated  
13 broadcasting companies in the country, until the sale of the  
14 station in 2000; and

15 WHEREAS, In 2001, Michael Banks relocated to Chicago, where  
16 he founded and served as President and CEO of MEBA LLC, a  
17 consultant firm for non-profit organizations; in this  
18 capacity, he served as a consultant to the Community and  
19 Economic Development Association of Cook County, Inc.'s  
20 planning department until his retirement in 2012; and

21 WHEREAS, Michael Banks was preceded in death by his  
22 parents; and

1           WHEREAS, Michael Banks is survived by his wife, Noel  
2           Stewart Banks; 2 children, Michael Banks, Jr. and Ebony Banks  
3           (Emorej) Henderson; a grandson, Elisha A. Henderson; a brother,  
4           Phillip Banks; 3 sisters, Rita Jackson, Patricia Hodges, and  
5           Lori Jackson; an uncle, Wilfred (Betty) Banks; and his many  
6           nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, cousins, and  
7           friends; therefore, be it

8           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL  
9           ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we, along with his  
10          family and friends, mourn the passing of Michael Edward Banks,  
11          Sr.; and be it further

12          RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
13          presented to the family of Michael Banks as an expression of  
14          our sympathy.