



SR1255

LRB099 15474 MST 39761 r

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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 Leslie H. "Les" Black of Taylor Ridge, who passed away on September 25, 2015; and

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WHEREAS, Les Black was born in Lancaster, Kentucky on March 3, 1934 to William and Margaret Kavanaugh Black; he served in the United States Army and graduated from Kentucky State University in 1960 while a member of the Army Reserve; and

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WHEREAS, Les Black immediately began his federal service career at the Ordnance Intern Training Center in Toledo, Ohio; he proudly served 19 of his 38-year federal career as the Director, Directorate of Industrial Operations, Rock Island Arsenal and its predecessor organizations; in 1999, he was inducted into the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps Hall of Fame, where he was described as "a leader in the Army's efforts to modernize its tool resources"; and

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WHEREAS, Les Black advocated quality tool kits and tools for soldiers and continuously sought ways to improve the quality of products in the Army Tool Kit Program; he led the design and development of three prototype tool kits, which were successfully field-tested in 1997; his modification of 5-ton trucks with Organization Shop Sets and Tool Kit programs in

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1 1994 with its laser-etched tools, foam inserts, and
2 computerized inventory list resulted in substantial cost
3 savings for aviation maintenance units worldwide; his Tool Kits
4 and Tool Chest Program in 1996 were adopted as a means to
5 overhaul the Army's hand tool inventory; he developed and
6 introduced inexpensive, lightweight tool boxes as replacements
7 for the expensive heavy metal boxes for aviation tools; his new
8 tool boxes were appreciated by troops in the field because they
9 were lighter, corrosion free, and easier to transport; during
10 the Persian Gulf War, he and his staff responded to an urgent
11 call for help from the commander of 2 Iowa National Guard units
12 to paint their equipment for deployment in 3 days; they worked
13 around the clock to wash, mask, paint, and stencil all 103
14 vehicles in time for deployment; his organization earned the
15 personal thanks of the President of the United States and then-
16 Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney for their "unselfish and
17 generous contribution to the men and women of the United States
18 Armed Forces serving in the Persian Gulf"; also under his
19 leadership, the Directorate of Industrial Operations completed
20 the prototype production of the Heavy Mobility Contact
21 Maintenance Trucks; their success led to the funding of 125
22 additional units; according to the Ordnance Corps, "Mr. Black
23 earned a stellar reputation as one of the country's best
24 future-thinking leaders making it possible for the Ordnance
25 Corps to stride into the 21st Century with confidence and ready
26 to serve the line with honor"; and

1 WHEREAS, Les Black is survived by his wife of 43 years,
2 Liliane Brechet; his daughter, Cherie Black; his daughter,
3 Christine Black; his brother, Lee M. Black; his brother-in-law,
4 Pierre (Elizabeth) Brechet; his 2 grandchildren; and numerous
5 nieces, nephews, other family members, and friends in the
6 states and overseas; therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL
8 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
9 Leslie H. "Les" Black, and extend our sincere condolences to
10 his family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it
11 further

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