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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 Plessa Edward Mast of Urbana, who passed away on February 19, 2016; and

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WHEREAS, Edward Mast was born in Bourbon, Indiana to Plessa L. and Vada Mae Mast on October 18, 1926; he lived in Churubusco and Nappanee, Indiana before moving to Peru, Indiana; he graduated from Peru High School in 1944 and started college at Purdue University the same year; after being drafted, he enlisted in the United States Navy as an electronics technician's mate in the fall of 1945, during World War II; he married Phyllis Oury in 1947; and

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WHEREAS, In 1946, Edward Mast volunteered to serve on the USS Appalachian, a communications ship that was at the Bikini Atoll atomic bomb tests; he returned to complete his undergraduate and master's degrees in electrical engineering at Purdue University; after a brief stint as an engineer for the Firestone Tire and Rubber Co. in Akron, Ohio, he joined the University of Illinois in 1952, starting a continuous association with the U of I by Edward, his children, and his grandchildren that lasted for 64 years to date; he received a Doctor in Electrical Engineering in 1958, and he remained at the U of I for his entire career as a professor of electrical

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1 engineering, becoming associate head of the Electrical  
2 Engineering Department in 1985, before retiring in 1987; in  
3 addition to his work at the U of I, he worked many summers for  
4 aerospace companies in Southern California, where he designed  
5 antennas for spacecraft and missiles, with a particular focus  
6 on electromagnetic propagation of radio frequency signals  
7 during spacecraft re-entry; and

8 WHEREAS, Edward Mast was an Eagle Scout, and all 6 of his  
9 sons and 7 of his grandsons are Eagle Scouts; when he gave a  
10 presentation at the Eagle Scout ceremony for his grandchildren,  
11 he remembered his experience getting a camping merit badge when  
12 he rode his bicycle to the woods, and stayed alone overnight  
13 with a gun for protection from animals; and

14 WHEREAS, Edward Mast built a car for the Great American  
15 Soapbox Derby in 1937, and his love for cars continued  
16 throughout his life; he learned to fix all the cars he owned  
17 through the years and he was a longstanding member of Illini  
18 Collector Car Club; and

19 WHEREAS, Edward Mast was proud of his Amish-Mennonite  
20 heritage and did extensive genealogy research, including  
21 tracing the immigration of his fourth great-grandfather, Jacob  
22 Mast, from Switzerland to Pennsylvania on the Charming Nancy in  
23 1737 and identifying his eighth great-grandfather, Benedict

1 Mast, who was born in Guggisberg, Canton Bern, Switzerland, in  
2 about 1570; and

3 WHEREAS, Edward Mast enjoyed spending time with his  
4 grandchildren, playing games, showing them his model train  
5 sets, and making them his hot chocolate with whipped cream; and

6 WHEREAS, Edward Mast was preceded in death by his parents  
7 and his sisters, Jane and Mary Etta; and

8 WHEREAS, Edward Mast is survived by his wife of 68 years,  
9 Phyllis; his 7 children, Philip (Katy), Kim (Cindy), Eric  
10 (Jill), Dan (Laura), Anne (John), Alan (Lynne), and Jeffery  
11 (Kristin); his 22 grandchildren; his 4 great-grandchildren;  
12 his brother, Paul Mast; and many extended family and cherished  
13 friends; therefore, be it

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

19 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
20 presented to the family of Edward Mast as an expression of our  
21 deepest sympathy.