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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 Patrick "Bill" Myers of Champaign, who passed away on September 30, 2016; and

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WHEREAS, William Myers was born on July 27, 1930 in Omaha, Nebraska; his parents were Arthur and Esther Myers; and

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WHEREAS, William Myers and his family moved to Chicago in the mid-1930s and he helped support his family by shining shoes, selling newspapers, and pedaling a bicycle ice cream cart; during his free time, he enjoyed swimming and playing baseball and "street football"; after his mother died in 1942, he and his siblings went to live in Angel Guardian Orphanage, where he attended school until 1946; he then lived with his aunt and uncle, Ruth and Fred Rueckhardt, while attending Nicholas Senn High School in Chicago and Iowa State Teacher's College (now Northern Iowa University); and

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WHEREAS, In 1952, William Myers enlisted in the United States Army, where he served as a mess sergeant and grill cook at the Officer's Club at Fort Leonard Wood; and

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WHEREAS, From 1954 to 1956, William Myers attended the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, where he earned a

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1 bachelor's degree in restaurant management; he later worked in
2 management positions with the Stouffer's Restaurant
3 Corporation in Chicago and New York from 1956 to 1959; he also
4 served as the associate director of housing at the University
5 of Illinois from 1959 to 1966 and as the food service manager
6 of residence halls at Stanford University from 1966 to 1972;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, In 1966, prior to accepting the job at Stanford
9 University, William Myers and two other men formed Franchise
10 Management Systems, an Arby's Restaurant franchise, in
11 Champaign; as founder, owner, and president of FMS, he was one
12 of the original Arby's franchisees; over the years, the
13 business expanded to include two Champaign-area restaurants,
14 Abigail's and Country Inn, as well as 16 Arby's, three G.D.
15 Ritzy's, and three Daddy-O's Restaurants in Champaign-Urbana,
16 Danville, Bradley, Bourbonnais, Peoria, and Moline, as well as
17 Davenport, Bettendorf, and Muscatine, Iowa; and

18 WHEREAS, William Myers was well known as a businessman,
19 mentor, and philanthropist until his semi-retirement in 2011,
20 when he became chairman of the board at FMS; after his full
21 retirement in 2015, he continued his philanthropic activities
22 through the William P. Myers Foundation; in 1981, he
23 established the William P. Myers Education Fund to assist
24 Cunningham Children's Home youths with education and job

1 training beyond the high school level; he supported other
2 Cunningham projects, such as participating in the annual
3 Kendall Gill Golf Outing, volunteering for and attending
4 Christmas and Thanksgiving celebrations, supporting music and
5 recreational programs, and making a major gift commitment to
6 their \$15 million Lighting the Way Capital Campaign; he
7 provided food, funding, and equipment for the Special Olympics;
8 he served as a mentor, counselor, and adviser at L.W.'s Place,
9 a drug and alcohol treatment center in Champaign; he donated
10 his time as a counselor and community advocate for Family Life
11 Skills Learning Center, a faith-based agency that teaches
12 individuals how to stop the cycle of abuse and build a healthy
13 home; he provided food, money, and monthly volunteer staffing
14 for the Daily Bread Soup Kitchen in Champaign; he provided
15 educational and job training programs at FMS, which hired
16 individuals with developmental disabilities and worked
17 directly with high school students in School-to-Work programs;
18 he also granted food service scholarships at the University of
19 Illinois, Northern Iowa University, Parkland Community
20 College, and Danville Area Community College; and

21 WHEREAS, William Myers is survived by his wife, Adele; his
22 children, Nathalie Pearson and Mark (Renee) Myers; his
23 stepchildren, Elizabeth (Andy) Varner, Jane (Trent) England,
24 Mike (Kari) Pankey, and Tim Pankey; and his grandchildren,
25 Jessica Pearson, Kathleen Varner, Michael Varner, Grace

1 Pankey, Kate Pankey, and Joe Pankey; therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL
3 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we, along with his
4 family and friends, mourn the passing of William Patrick "Bill"
5 Myers; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
7 presented to the family of William Myers as an expression of
8 our sympathy.