



SR2513

LRB099 24306 MST 52052 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 Joe W. Freelon Sr., the first African American Mayor of Maywood, who passed away on November 18, 2016; and

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WHEREAS, Mayor Freelon was born in Grenada, Mississippi on September 15, 1929; he attended Grenada elementary and high schools before entering the United States Army; in 1956, he graduated from Tuskegee University with a bachelor's degree, where he was in the ROTC program; after graduation, he re-entered the military and was stationed in Fort Bliss in Texas; and

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WHEREAS, Mayor Freelon moved to Chicago and became a social studies and math teacher in the Chicago public schools; in 1964, he and his wife, Gladys, moved to Maywood and joined the Second Baptist Church, where he served as Chairman of the Deacon Board for over 40 years, and was a longtime member of the Maple Tree Child Care Center; and

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WHEREAS, Mayor Freelon was elected Mayor of Maywood on November 3, 1982; his election began a string of African Americans being elected Mayor across the nation, with Chicago electing Harold Washington, Philadelphia electing Wilson

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1 Goode, and New York City electing David Dinkins; and

2 WHEREAS, Mayor Freelon served four terms in office; he lost
3 his bid for a fifth term in 1989, but ran again in 1993 and won,
4 serving for eight more years; and

5 WHEREAS, In 2014, Mayor Freelon was appointed to the Fire
6 and Police Pension Board by Maywood Mayor Edweena Perkins; in
7 October of 2014, he was honored by the Maywood Police
8 Department for "initiating a turnaround" for the Village; and

9 WHEREAS, Mayor Freelon and his wife, Gladys, were married
10 for 61 years; together they had two children, Joe Jr. and
11 Gawana; five grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren;
12 therefore, be it

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

18 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
19 presented to the family of Mayor Freelon as an expression of
20 our deepest sympathy.