

1

SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate wish to
3 express their sincere condolences to the family and friends
4 of former Governor William Grant Stratton, who passed away on
5 March 2, 2001; and

6 WHEREAS, Governor Stratton was the youngest person to
7 hold the office of Governor in the twentieth century; he was
8 38 years old when he was elected to the position in 1952; and

9 WHEREAS, Mr. Stratton was born in Ingelside on February
10 26, 1914; his parents were William Joseph Stratton and Zula
11 Van Wormer Stratton; he graduated from the University of
12 Arizona in 1934, majoring in political science; and

13 WHEREAS, In 1940 Mr. Stratton was elected U.S.
14 Congressman-at-large at 25 years of age, becoming the
15 youngest member of the U.S. House of Representatives and was
16 known as the "Baby of the House"; in 1942 he became the
17 youngest constitutional officer in the State of Illinois when
18 he was elected State treasurer; in 1948 he lost his bid for
19 the position of Secretary of State, and then joined the
20 United States Navy, serving as lieutenant in the South
21 Pacific during World War II; and

22 WHEREAS, Upon his return from service, Mr. Stratton
23 regained his seat in the U.S. House; in 1950 he reclaimed the
24 State treasurer's office; in 1952 he defeated Lieutenant
25 Governor Sherwood Dixon to win the gubernatorial election,
26 and he was elected to a second term as Governor in 1956; and

27 WHEREAS, During his time as Governor, William Stratton
28 built the economic backbone of the State of Illinois; he laid
29 out plans for O'Hare International Airport, McCormick Place,
30 and the University of Illinois at Chicago, working beside
31 Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley; he built more than 7,000

1 miles of new roads, including 187 miles of expressway in the
2 Chicago area, and 638 bridges across the State; he won
3 approval for bond issues to construct the University of
4 Illinois at Chicago and Southern Illinois University at
5 Edwardsville; he also expanded the Northern, Eastern, and
6 Western Illinois campuses; and

7 WHEREAS, Governor Stratton spoke out against racial
8 discrimination, attempted to create a fair-employment
9 commission, and named the first woman and first
10 African-American to a gubernatorial cabinet; and

11 WHEREAS, After leaving the office, Mr. Stratton was vice
12 president of corporate relations at Canteen Corporation,
13 board chairman of the Illinois Restaurant Association, and a
14 board member of the Illinois State Chamber of Commerce; at
15 the time of his death he was a vice president of Associated
16 Bank of Chicago; and

17 WHEREAS, In December of 2000 William Stratton and his
18 wife, Shirley, celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, The passing of former Illinois Governor William
21 Grant Stratton will be deeply felt by all who knew and loved
22 him, especially his wife, Shirley; his daughters, Nancy
23 Taylor, Sandra Jane Gardner, and Diana Weiskopf; his
24 sisters-in-law, Majorie H. Breckenridge and Barbara
25 Breckenridge; and his five grandchildren; therefore, be it

26 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SECOND GENERAL
27 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing
28 of former Governor William Grant Stratton and extend our
29 sympathies to his family and friends at this time; and be it
30 further

31 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be

1 presented to the family of William Grant Stratton.