

## 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 the Honorable John A. Oremus, who passed away on April 4,  
5 2002; and

6 WHEREAS, Mayor Oremus was known as "Mr. Bridgeview", the  
7 man who, like an artist with a blank canvas, took a tiny  
8 suburb with few paved streets and painted it into a  
9 prosperous community; and

10 WHEREAS, For more than 40 years, Mayor Oremus led the  
11 village of Bridgeview and for a long time was the only mayor  
12 many residents ever knew; in some ways, his mark on the  
13 village is obvious, there is John A. Oremus Drive, the Oremus  
14 Community Center and Prairie Material Sales Inc., the  
15 multimillion-dollar construction materials supplier he built  
16 from scratch; and

17 WHEREAS, Born in Chicago on December 29, 1913, Mayor  
18 Oremus emigrated to Europe two years later with his mother,  
19 who died of diphtheria only months later; he and his sister  
20 returned to the United States a few years later to live with  
21 their father, moving to an area of unincorporated Cook County  
22 that is now Bridgeview; when he was a sophomore at Argo High  
23 School, his stepmother urged him to find a job to help  
24 support the family; and

25 WHEREAS, Mayor Oremus held several jobs, and in the  
26 mid-1940s bought 16 acres in the 7600 block of West 79th  
27 Street; there he founded Prairie Material Sales, one of the  
28 Midwest's largest suppliers of construction materials and  
29 ready-mix products; and

30 WHEREAS, Mayor Oremus was first elected mayor in 1955,  
31 but lost the 1959 election; he then won the 1963 race and

1 stayed in office until 1999; and

2 WHEREAS, Mayor Oremus had a dream to make Bridgeview into  
3 a well-balanced community - a motto that defines the village  
4 to this day; he sought out industry and businesses to balance  
5 the village's tax base and wanted to ensure that residents  
6 had a nice place to live; he paved streets that were mudholes  
7 and installed sewers where there were none; during his  
8 tenure, he recognized that Harlem Avenue, which once was a  
9 two-lane road, would become a busy commercial thoroughfare  
10 and began annexing land along the road into the village; in  
11 addition, he started free Christmas parties for children and  
12 senior citizens, and he began the Needy Families Fund that  
13 bought groceries and Christmas presents for families in  
14 financial trouble; and

15 WHEREAS, Mayor Oremus was also a director of the Illinois  
16 Municipal League, a trustee of Lewis University in  
17 Romeoville, and founder of Prairie Bank and Trust; and

18 WHEREAS, In 1999, more than 20 south suburbs recognized  
19 Mayor Oremus' dedication to community service and declared a  
20 week "John A. Oremus Week."; and

21 WHEREAS, Of all Mayor Oremus' accomplishments, honors,  
22 awards, professional or political, the thing he was proud of  
23 most was his family; and

24 WHEREAS, Mayor Oremus was the beloved husband of the  
25 late Angeline (nee Mularski), loving father of Dorothy Oremus  
26 (John) Lindauer, Robert J. Oremus and the late Jack and  
27 Thomas Oremus, devoted grandfather of Kim (Bill) Hanson, J.  
28 Alan (Susan) Oremus, Sheri (David) Braun, Michael Oremus,  
29 James Oremus, Gary (Rose) and John Christopher Oremus, dear  
30 great-grandfather of Justin, Jordon, Taylor, Sara, Chloe,  
31 Alexandra, Abbey, Evan, Austin, Emma, Cooper, Jack,  
32 Eisabella, J.R. and Joe, and dearest brother of the late Mary

1 Butcher; and

2 WHEREAS, For more than four decades, Mayor Oremus led  
3 Bridgeview and embraced the village and its residents like  
4 they were his family; his memory will live on as the father  
5 of Bridgeview; therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SECOND GENERAL  
7 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with  
8 all who knew him, the death of John A. Oremus of Bridgeview,  
9 Illinois; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
11 presented to the family of the Honorable John A. Oremus with  
12 our sincere condolences.