



HR0866

LRB100 20456 ALS 35808 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of William Cousins Jr., who passed away on January 20, 2018; and

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WHEREAS, Bill Cousins was born in Swiftown, Mississippi, the son of a longshoreman father; he moved with his family to Memphis, Tennessee in 1931, and then to Chicago in 1938; he attended Forrestville Elementary School and was president of the 1945 graduating class at DuSable High School; he received a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Illinois in 1948; after college, he knew he wanted to impact the public policy debate by becoming a lawyer; he was accepted at Yale, Columbia, Michigan, and Harvard Law Schools; he chose Harvard and graduated in 1951; his journey of public service also extended to military service; he was a platoon leader, Second Lieutenant Infantry, in the United States Army during the Korean War; he was later promoted to First Lieutenant; while in Japan, he met Hiroko Ogawa; they married in Japan in 1953; and

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WHEREAS, Bill Cousins began working as an examining attorney for Chicago Title & Trust Co.; he then served as an assistant state's attorney; in 1961, he and three other African-American attorneys and Harvard Law School graduates

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1 formed a law firm; and

2 WHEREAS, Bill Cousins led the Chatham-Avalon Park
3 Community Council, where he worked to oppose high-rise housing
4 in the neighborhood; he was elected alderman in 1967 and made
5 the community viable by meeting with constituents, attending
6 book club meetings, and effectively communicating with
7 residents; he resigned from the City Council after he was
8 elected to the Cook County Circuit Court in 1976; and

9 WHEREAS, Bill Cousins later served on panels that
10 investigated two separate, deadly fire tragedies in Chicago and
11 helped make important fire safety recommendations that were
12 implemented; and

13 WHEREAS, Bill Cousins believed that the only way to make
14 life better was to help those with greater needs, that nothing
15 worthwhile was easy, and that the ability to overcome
16 unfavorable situations provides the true strength and
17 determination needed for success; and

18 WHEREAS, Bill Cousins was preceded in death by his wife,
19 Hiroko; and

20 WHEREAS, Bill Cousins is survived by his daughters, Cheryl
21 Akiko Cousins and Gail Yoshiko Cousins; his sons, Yul Cousins

1 and Noel Cousins; and his four grandchildren; therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
3 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
4 mourn the passing of William Cousins Jr. and extend our sincere
5 condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved
6 him; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
8 presented to the family of Bill Cousins as an expression of our
9 deepest sympathy.