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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 Frank J. Bussone of Roanoke, who passed away on March 15, 2017 at the age of 74; and

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WHEREAS, Frank Bussone graduated from Roanoke-Benson High School, where he served as the President of his senior class; he earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Bradley University, where he also taught; and

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WHEREAS, Frank Bussone was a National Fellow and earned a full scholarship towards his doctoral work in communications from the University of Southern California (USC); while at USC, he coached the General Electric College Bowl Quiz Team to an undefeated national title which was televised on NBC-TV in New York City; two years later, he coached Bradley's College Bowl Team to a perfect record and another national championship also televised on NBC-TV in New York City; he is the only person to have coached two universities to national championships; and

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WHEREAS, Frank Bussone's career began at Bradley University as an Administrator, where he brought the sitting President of the United States, Gerald R. Ford, to campus for a speech; he also worked at WMBD-TV and Radio, calling Bradley basketball games, IHSA State Basketball Tournaments, and

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1 anchored weekend sports on Channel 31 WMBD; he served as
2 Vice-President of The Dirksen Congressional Leadership Center
3 in Pekin; and

4 WHEREAS, Frank Bussone moved to WEEK-TV, where his Sunday
5 evening sports program became the area's top-rated sports show;
6 in just a few years, he was named President and CEO of WEEK-TV,
7 where he brought Ronald and Nancy Reagan and George H.W. and
8 Barbara Bush to the station to prepare and give their 1980
9 election eve address; he served as Executive Vice-President of
10 Eagle Broadcasting Company in New York City and was named the
11 anchor television play-by-play broadcaster for the Illinois
12 State High School Basketball Tourney on WGN-TV and the State
13 Network; he served for 11 top-rated years while still leading
14 WEEK-TV and calling Bradley Basketball on TV; he broadcast more
15 Bradley basketball games on TV than anyone in history; he built
16 a brand new TV station during his tenure at WEEK; in 1983, he
17 was elected to the State of Illinois Basketball Hall of Fame,
18 and in 1988, was elected to the Bradley University Hall of
19 Fame; and

20 WHEREAS, Frank Bussone covered two of the most famous
21 basketball games in history - the longest game in college
22 basketball history - the seven-overtime battle in 1981 between
23 Bradley and Cincinnati at Robertson Fieldhouse; he also called
24 the play-by-play for "The greatest game ever in the IHSA

1 Basketball Tourney" - the 1989 three-overtime game between
2 Peoria Central and East St. Louis Lincoln; and

3 WHEREAS, Frank Bussone became President and CEO of The
4 Proctor Healthcare Foundation, where he directed the massive
5 development project and acquisition of adjacent homes for the
6 hospital expansion; he also secured the naming gift for the
7 Ameel G. Rashid Center for Addiction Recovery at Proctor
8 Hospital in Peoria; and

9 WHEREAS, Frank Bussone served on the Board of Directors of
10 St. Jude Children's Hospital, where he was co-host of the
11 annual telethons with Danny Thomas, Marlo Thomas, Phil Donahue,
12 and Jim Maloof; he was elected to the Board of Directors of the
13 State of Illinois American Heart Association; he was named by
14 Governor Jim Edgar as the sole public member of the Illinois
15 Optometric Board, where he served 12 years, longer than any
16 public member; he served on the Board of Directors of Family
17 House, Junior Achievement, The Hult Center for Health
18 Education, the Peoria Civic Opera Co., the Bradley University
19 National Alumni Association, and was one of the founding
20 members of the Bradley Chiefs Club; and

21 WHEREAS, Frank Bussone was named to the "Who's Who in
22 America" for the first time in 1998 and for several years
23 after; he was given the honor of inclusion in Outstanding Young

1 Men in America, Community Leaders of the World, International
2 Who's Who in Community Service, International Who's Who of
3 Intellectuals, and Outstanding Leaders of the Bicentennial
4 Era; and

5 WHEREAS, Frank Bussone gave speeches in most major cities
6 in the U.S. and shared the dais with numerous celebrities,
7 including President George H.W. Bush, U.S. Senate Leader Howard
8 Baker, President Ronald Reagan, Vice-President Al Gore,
9 General William Westmorland, Surgeon General C. Everett Coop,
10 Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General John
11 Shalikashvili, President Gerald Ford, Ambassador Nancy
12 Brinker, Governor and Mrs. Jim Edgar, Harry Caray, and Jack
13 Brickhouse; and

14 WHEREAS, Frank Bussone conducted numerous interviews in
15 Hollywood and around the country while at NBC-TV; some of those
16 include Johnny Carson, Ted Danson, Mohammad Ali, Vin Scully,
17 Dick Enberg, Barbara Eden, Morgan Fairchild, Michael J. Fox,
18 Connie Chung, Al Maguire, Coach Mike Krzyzewski, Mary Tyler
19 Moore, Grant Tinker, and many more; and

20 WHEREAS, Frank Bussone was preceded in death by his
21 parents, Joseph T. and Olma F. Bussone; his special aunt, Mona
22 Descarpentrie; and his grandparents, Frank and Julia
23 Descarpentrie, and Constance and Valentina Bussone; and

1 WHEREAS, Frank Bussone is survived by his wife, Lisa
2 Cantor-Bussone; his son, R.J. (Jennifer) Bussone; his
3 granddaughters, Julia, Corinne, and Natalie Bussone; his
4 former wife, Karen Bussone; his stepchildren, Taylor
5 Wright-Simmons, and Carson Wright; and his step-granddaughter,
6 Sophia Simmons; therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH GENERAL
8 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
9 Frank J. Bussone, and extend our sincere condolences to his
10 family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it
11 further

12 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
13 presented to the family of Frank Bussone as an expression of
14 our deepest sympathy.