



SR0638

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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 Jesse A. "Tony" Clements of Champaign, who passed away on June 9, 2017; and

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WHEREAS, Jesse Clements was born in Raleigh, North Carolina to Jesse Jr. and Doris Baugh Clements on February 24, 1949; he earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Illinois, where he was on the basketball team his freshman year and the football team after that; and

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WHEREAS, While working on his graduate degree, Jesse Clements joined the Division of Campus Recreation at the university, where he remained for 38 years; in 1979, he was named its director, one of the first black men to hold that position at a major university in the United States; he also served as the official scorekeeper for the university for 30 years; and

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WHEREAS, Jesse Clements was active in the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA), serving as president of that organization from 1988 to 1989; he was presented the NIRSA Honor Award in 1996; in 2002, he won the University of Illinois' Chancellor's Academic Professional Excellence Award; he was named the recipient of the Monsignor

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1 Edward J. Duncan Service Award, presented annually a football  
2 letterman who has displayed exemplary dedication to his  
3 community, state, and country; and

4 WHEREAS, Upon his retirement, Jesse Clements was appointed  
5 as a board member of the United Way of Champaign County (UWCC);  
6 during his time with the United Way, he was the co-chair of the  
7 Annual Campaign, co-chair of the Pillar Committee, and co-chair  
8 of the Marketing Committee; he also served as a member of the  
9 UWCC's executive committee; in 2012, he was the UWCC interim  
10 CEO; and

11 WHEREAS, In January of 2014, Jesse Clements received the  
12 Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser award from the National  
13 Philanthropy Association; he also joined the board of the  
14 Marajen Stevick Foundation; in May 2017, he was inducted into  
15 the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame as a  
16 Friend of Basketball; and

17 WHEREAS, One of Jesse Clements' favorite pastimes was  
18 performing stand-up comedy; he produced his own annual comedy  
19 show, The Clements Comedy Cafe, from 1990 through 2014;  
20 throughout the 25 years, the Comedy Cafe supported a number of  
21 social service organizations, including the East Central  
22 Illinois Foodbank, the C-U Schools Foundation, and the  
23 Champaign Parks Foundation; he also performed with comedian

1 Sinbad, emceed shows for Stevie Wonder and Aretha Franklin, and  
2 had been the opening act for Jerry Butler and Ray Charles; in  
3 1998, he was asked to be the warm-up act when President Clinton  
4 and Vice President Gore visited the University of Illinois; and

5 WHEREAS, Jesse Clements' highest priority was his  
6 relationships with his family, friends, and community; and

7 WHEREAS, Jesse Clements was preceded in death by his  
8 parents; and

9 WHEREAS, Jesse Clements is survived by his companion,  
10 Debbie Shilts; his sister, Deborah Blanks; his nephew, Geraud  
11 Blanks (Element Everest); his great-niece, Karma Blanks; his  
12 stepmother, Lois Clements; his aunt, Cornelia Jane Jackson  
13 Liggins; and his uncle, Robert Jackson; therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH GENERAL  
15 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
16 Jesse A. "Tony" Clements, and extend our sincere condolences to  
17 his family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it  
18 further

19 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
20 presented to the family of Jesse Clements as an expression of  
21 our deepest sympathy.