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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the 93rd General Assembly of the State of Illinois learned with great sadness of the death of their colleague, Senator Vince Demuzio, on Tuesday, April 27, 2004; and

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WHEREAS, Senator Demuzio was born on May 7, 1941, in Gillespie; he attended Ss. Simon and Jude Catholic School and Gillespie High School; he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in education and human services from the University of Illinois at Springfield in 1981; he earned a Master of Arts degree in education and public policy from the same school in 1996; he received an Honorary Doctorate from Lewis & Clark Community College, and a Doctor of Laws, Honorist Causa, from Blackburn College; and

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WHEREAS, Senator Demuzio was currently the Senate Majority Leader, Chairman of the Senate Rules Committee, and Dean of the Illinois Senate, having served in the upper chamber since 1975; he was also a sitting member of the Education, Executive, and Executive Appointments Committees; and

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WHEREAS, Prior to his election to the Illinois Senate from the 49th legislative district, he served as Executive Director of the Illinois Valley Economic Development Corporation, a community action agency providing programs in job training, senior citizen nutrition, day care, sheltered workshops for the physically and mentally handicapped, and other social services; and

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WHEREAS, Senator Demuzio was appointed Assistant Senate Majority Leader in the 83rd General Assembly (1983-1984) and was reappointed in the 84th, 85th, 86th, and 87th General Assemblies; in January of 1993, he was appointed Assistant Democratic Leader of the 88th General Assembly and again

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1 reappointed in the 89th, 90th, 91st, and 92nd; In January of
2 2003, he was appointed Senate Majority Leader, only the second
3 person in the last thirty years to hold that position; Senator
4 Demuzio was one of the General Assembly's leading spokesmen for
5 the interests of downstate Illinois; he was also a member of
6 the Legislative Audit Commission and served on the Steering
7 Committee to re-examine the Illinois Constitution; he served on
8 both the 1991 and 2001 Legislative Redistricting Commissions;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, Senator Demuzio was elected to the Illinois
11 Democratic State Central Committee from the 20th Congressional
12 District in 1982, and re-elected in 1986, 1990, 1994, and 1998;
13 he was elected Chairman of the Illinois Democratic Party in
14 April of 1986 and served through April of 1990; he was the
15 first Chairman elected from downstate Illinois in more than 40
16 years and is credited with rebuilding the infrastructure of the
17 Illinois Democratic Party; he also served as Chairman of the
18 Illinois delegation to the Democratic National Convention in
19 Atlanta in 1988 and as a member of the Democratic National
20 Committee's Executive Committee; he often served as the emcee
21 at the Illinois State Fair's annual Democrat Day; and

22 WHEREAS, As a freshman senator in the post-Watergate era,
23 Vince Demuzio is credited with bringing legislative and
24 Democratic Party reforms with a like-minded group of lawmakers
25 affectionately known as the "Crazy Eight"; he was an advocate
26 for consumers; and

27 WHEREAS, The hallmark of Senator Demuzio's legislative
28 career was education. Senator Demuzio believed that educating
29 children well was an investment in the future. His outspoken
30 advocacy for Illinois schools throughout the years made him one
31 of the foremost leaders on education issues in the Senate,
32 earning him a spot on the education committee in each of his
33 thirty years serving in the Senate; and

1 WHEREAS, He fought valiantly to secure funds for the
2 Illinois School for the Visually Impaired and the School for
3 the Deaf, which were both in his district and held a special
4 place in his heart; and

5 WHEREAS, Senator Demuzio received numerous distinguished
6 legislative service awards during his tenure; he served as
7 Secretary of the Blackburn College Board of Trustees in
8 Carlinville, Vice Chair of the Carlinville Hospital Board, and
9 he was on the Board of Directors for Kemmerer Village, a child
10 care agency, in Assumption; he was a member of numerous
11 fraternal and social organizations; and

12 WHEREAS, Among the highlights of his legislative career,
13 Senator Demuzio played a major role in securing funding for the
14 creation of the Orr Research Center in Pike County and the
15 completion of the Central Illinois Expressway, Route 36
16 (currently, I-72), from Jacksonville to Quincy; he received
17 national attention as part of a fight to clean up hazardous
18 waste in Wilsonville and has helped obtain funding for major
19 road improvements along the Route 67 corridor from Alton to
20 Jacksonville; in 1999, he led a coalition from Christian County
21 that convinced the Governor to appropriate funds in the
22 Illinois FIRST program to turn Route 29 from Rochester to
23 Taylorville into a four-lane road; he helped numerous rural
24 communities obtain funding for sewer and water improvements and
25 was especially proud to sponsor legislation renaming the
26 State's income tax check-off for breast and cervical cancer on
27 the State income tax return in honor of the late State Senator
28 Penny Severns; and

29 WHEREAS, The passing of Senator Vince Demuzio has been
30 deeply felt by many across Illinois, especially his wife,
31 Deanna (Clemonds); his son, Brad and his wife Lori (Hackman);
32 his daughter, Stephanie Blair and her husband, Patrick; his

1 mother, Catherine (Murphy) Demuzio; his mother-in-law,
2 Virginia Clemonds; his sisters, Marlene Demuzio, Donna Burke,
3 Catherine Visintin, and Bernadette Hasquin; and his 4
4 grandchildren, Blake, Brooke, Tristan, and Gillian; therefore,
5 be it

6 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-THIRD GENERAL
7 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
8 CONCURRING HEREIN, that we mourn the passing of Senator Vince
9 Demuzio, our friend and colleague, who served the people with
10 honor and distinction and exemplified the highest standards,
11 which won him unequivocal admiration; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
13 presented to the family of Senator Vince Demuzio as an
14 expression of our sincerest condolences for the loss of their
15 loved one and our friend.