



1 SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Senate of the State of Illinois
3 learned with sadness of the death of Archbishop Iakovos, who
4 transformed the Greek Orthodox Church in the Americas while
5 championing religious unity and human rights, on Sunday, April
6 10, 2005; and

7 WHEREAS, He was born Demetrios Coucouzis in Turkey and took
8 the name Iakovos, which means James, when he was ordained a
9 deacon in 1934; he spoke several languages and could hold
10 children as well as adults spellbound by his sermons; and

11 WHEREAS, Archbishop Iakovos headed the Greek Orthodox
12 Archdiocese of North and South America, with an estimated 2
13 million followers, from 1959 until 1996; he met with Pope John
14 XXIII after his 1959 enthronement, becoming the first Greek
15 Orthodox archbishop in 350 years to meet with a Roman Catholic
16 pope, and spent nine years as a president of the World Council
17 of Churches; and

18 WHEREAS, He marched with Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. in
19 Selma, Alabama, in 1965 and received the Medal of Freedom from
20 President Jimmy Carter in 1980; he was as strong proponent of
21 ecumenism; and

22 WHEREAS, He was instrumental in setting up dialogues
23 between Orthodox churches and Anglicans, Lutherans, Southern
24 Baptists, and other denominations; he met every president from
25 Dwight Eisenhower through Bill Clinton, and was one of the U.S.
26 Christian leaders who met with Pope John Paul II in a historic
27 gathering in South Carolina in 1987; and

28 WHEREAS, During his long tenure as archbishop, he led the
29 Greek Orthodox church out of immigrant isolation and into the
30 mainstream of American religious life, playing a leading role

1 in bringing English into the liturgy; and

2 WHEREAS, Archbishop Iakovos started a youth movement in the
3 United States and created the Ionian Village in Greece, a
4 summer camp that has been visited by more than 16,000
5 Greek-American children; and

6 WHEREAS, He sought to maintain Orthodox traditions such as
7 opposing the ordination of women, while at the same time
8 championing human rights and improved race relations; and

9 WHEREAS, Archbishop Iakovos is remembered as a superb
10 archbishop who offered to the church an intense, continuous,
11 multifaceted, and creative pastoral activity; therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL
13 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
14 Archbishop Iakovos, and we extend our deepest sympathy to his
15 family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it
16 further

17 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
18 presented to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America as an
19 expression of our sincerest condolences in the passing of a
20 great leader.