



1

SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to
3 learn of the death of John Kenneth Galbraith, who passed away
4 on April 29, 2006; and

5 WHEREAS, Professor Galbraith spent more than 25 years on
6 the Harvard University faculty and advised Democratic
7 presidents and candidates from Franklin D. Roosevelt to Bill
8 Clinton; and

9 WHEREAS, As an author, Professor Galbraith wrote many
10 books; one of the most influential was "The Affluent Society"
11 in 1958, which argued that overproduction of consumer goods was
12 harming the public sector and depriving Americans of such
13 benefits as clean air, clean streets, good schools, and support
14 for the arts; and

15 WHEREAS, Professor Galbraith was generally considered to
16 have been an apostle of the theories advanced by British
17 economist John Maynard Keynes: that government could promote
18 full employment and a stable economy by stimulating spending
19 and investment with adjustments in interest and tax rates, and
20 deficit financing; He lamented what he believed was an excess
21 accumulation of private wealth at the expense of public needs,
22 and he warned that an unfettered free market system and
23 capitalism without regulation would fail to meet basic social
24 demands; This was echoed in "The Affluent Society."; and

25 WHEREAS, In the early 1960s, while serving as President
26 John F. Kennedy's ambassador to India, Professor Galbraith
27 expressed grave doubts about increasing U.S. involvement in the
28 cankerous conflict brewing in Southeast Asia that would erupt
29 into the Vietnam War; later that decade, he was chairman of the
30 leftleaning Americans for Democratic Action, and he backed the
31 unsuccessful antiwar presidential candidacy of Sen. Eugene J.

1 McCarthy in 1968; and

2 WHEREAS, Regarded by admirers such as Sen. Edward M.
3 Kennedy (D-Mass.) as a "true Renaissance man," Professor
4 Galbraith also wrote about the art of India and penned several
5 novels including one work of fiction, "The Triumph" (1968),
6 about the final days of a Central American dictatorship and its
7 relationship to what the author called "an uncontrollably funny
8 institution" -- the U.S. State Department; and

9 WHEREAS, In 2000 Professor Galbraith received the
10 Presidential Medal of Freedom, the U.S. government's highest
11 civilian honor from President Bill Clinton; and

12 WHEREAS, John Kenneth Galbraith was born Oct. 15, 1908, on
13 a small farm near Iona Station in Ontario, Canada; from his
14 father, a leading figure in the local branch of the Canadian
15 Liberal Party, he inherited his politics, his wit and his
16 height; As a child he accompanied his father to political
17 rallies; and

18 WHEREAS, He studied animal husbandry at Ontario
19 Agricultural College at Guelph and later received a doctorate
20 in agricultural economics at the University of California at
21 Berkeley; In 1934, Professor Galbraith joined the Harvard
22 faculty, where he would serve with several interruptions until
23 he retired in 1975; He became a U.S. citizen in 1937, then left
24 the country on a year-long sabbatical as a research fellow at
25 Cambridge University in England, where he became a disciple of
26 Keynesian economics; and

27 WHEREAS, Professor Galbraith served a year on the economics
28 faculty at Princeton University in 1939, then came to
29 Washington to work with the National Defense Advisory
30 Committee, established to prepare the U.S. economy for war; His
31 mentor in the federal bureaucracy was Leon Henderson, a leading

1 New Dealer; Henderson put Professor Galbraith in charge of the
2 price division in the Office of Price Administration, which was
3 arguably the most powerful civilian post in the management of
4 the wartime economy; and

5 WHEREAS, Starting in 1943, he spent five years writing and
6 editing at Fortune magazine and took leaves of absence for
7 special assignments; After Germany surrendered in 1945, he went
8 to Europe to direct the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey; and

9 WHEREAS, After rejoining the Harvard faculty in 1949 as
10 professor of economics, he wrote the books that brought him
11 renown as an economic thinker; besides "The Affluent Society,"
12 there was "American Capitalism" (1952), "The New Industrial
13 State" (1967) and "Economics and the Public Purpose" (1973);
14 and

15 WHEREAS, On the political front, Professor Galbraith
16 campaigned for John F. Kennedy in the 1960 presidential
17 election; in 1961 he took a two-year leave from Harvard to
18 serve as ambassador to India; aside from the India-China border
19 war of 1962, there was rarely a full day's work to be done, so
20 the ambassador used the extra time to write more books; among
21 them were "Indian Painting" (1968), an art book he wrote with
22 Mohinder Singh Randhawa, and his first novel, "The McLandress
23 Dimension" (1963), a satire written under the pseudonym Mark
24 Epernay; After leaving New Delhi, Professor Galbraith wrote
25 "Ambassador's Journal" (1969), a day-to-day account of his
26 service in India; and

27 WHEREAS, After his retirement from Harvard, Professor
28 Galbraith continued to write, travel and speak to packed
29 auditoriums; he wrote an autobiography, "A Life in Our Times"
30 (1981); he was host of the British-made television series "The
31 Age of Uncertainty" and author of a best-selling book by the
32 same name; with Soviet economist Stanislav Menshikov, he wrote

1 "Capitalism, Communism and Coexistence: From a Bitter Past to a
2 Better Prospect; and

3 WHEREAS, In 1999, Professor Galbraith wrote
4 "Name-Dropping," a collection of remembrances of famous
5 figures he'd encountered, including Harry S. Truman and
6 Jawaharlal Nehru; He divided his time between his home in
7 Cambridge, summers at his "unfarmed farm" in Newfane, Vt., and
8 a chalet in Gstaad, Switzerland, where he spent winters skiing;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, From 2000 to 2003 Professor Galbraith, his lovely
11 wife Catherine and devoted housekeeper Sheela, shared their
12 beautiful home at 30 Francis with State Senator Jacqueline
13 Collins while she was studying at Harvard; and

14 WHEREAS, Professor Galbraith is survived by his wife,
15 Catherine Atwater Galbraith, whom he married in 1937; and three
16 sons, Alan, Peter, and James; One son, Douglas, preceded him in
17 death; therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL
19 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we extend our sincere
20 condolences to the family and friends of Professor John Kenneth
21 Galbraith, truly a great part of American economic history; and
22 be it further

23 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
24 presented to the family of John Kenneth Galbraith.