



HR1662

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of former
4 State Representative and State Senator, William "Bill" Shaw of
5 Dolton, who recently passed away; and

6 WHEREAS, William "Bill" Shaw was born as a twin, July 31,
7 1937 in Hope, Arkansas, to McKinley and Gertrude Shaw; he was
8 the fifth of six siblings; at an early age, the family
9 relocated to Chicago, where he completed his formal education
10 and continued his spiritual growth; as an adult, he united with
11 the Grant Memorial AME Church; and

12 WHEREAS, William Shaw and his wife, Shirley, raised three
13 children, Gina, Victor Andre, and Shawn, on Chicago's
14 Southside, providing them with love and a first hand taste for
15 the political atmosphere of the day; as a teen, always working
16 side by side with his twin, Robert, William discovered a
17 passion for politics and government; he took the political
18 astuteness he learned on Chicago's Westside with him when he
19 relocated to the Southside; serving in various positions in
20 government over the years, William found numerous avenues to
21 help others; and

22 WHEREAS, In 1982, after many years in local government,

1 William Shaw was sworn into the State legislature as
2 Representative of the 34th District; after the re-districting
3 following the 1990 Census, he moved further south to the
4 Village of Dolton, where he successfully ran for the Illinois
5 Senate, representing the 15th District; at the urging of the
6 community, Senator Shaw ran for Mayor of Dolton and, in 1997,
7 was elected the village's first African-American mayor; he
8 worked tirelessly in both houses of the General Assembly to
9 pass legislation that positively impacted the lives of his
10 constituents, including legislation that created the Illinois
11 Donor Program within the Illinois Secretary of State's office;
12 one of the efforts he was most proud of was the ground breaking
13 legislation he and Senator Emil Jones passed mandating that
14 African-American history be taught in all Illinois public
15 schools; and

16 WHEREAS, William Shaw served as a member of the Senate
17 Environment & Energy Committee and the Education Committee
18 while at the Statehouse; as a member of the Senate Local
19 Government Committee, he was instrumental in the redevelopment
20 of the Historic Pullman District on Chicago's Southside; during
21 his tenure as Senator, he was truly one who brought home the
22 bacon, securing millions in funding that improved the quality
23 of life and services throughout the 15th District, including
24 the building of the Melanie Fitness Center, a state-of-the-art
25 health and fitness center; and

1 WHEREAS, William Shaw was well known as a people person who
2 loved gathering a group of politically aware people around him
3 to discuss, and often argue, current political issues; he was a
4 mentor, a teacher, a champion, and a father figure for many
5 aspiring to serve in government; as a legislator and mayor he
6 made youth, education, and health issues high priorities; his
7 desire was to provide computers for every school in his
8 district, which he did; and

9 WHEREAS, As mayor of Dolton, William Shaw founded the Mayor
10 William "Bill" Shaw's Youth Leadership Academy, which mentors
11 junior and senior high school students in the development of
12 their public service commitment; he awarded numerous
13 scholarships to college bound students and donated Village land
14 to the Park District to build the Dolton Little League "Field
15 of Dreams"; near and dear to his heart was the Village's
16 "Crossroads to Health" Annual Cancer Walk, raising awareness
17 for the need for more funding to find a cure; the money raised
18 goes to the Jennifer S. Fallick Cancer Center, which provides
19 social and support services for families of cancer patients;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, William Shaw was known to work across both party
22 and racial lines to bring about positive results; his desire
23 was that Dolton be a first class place for families to live; he

1 was a mayor with an open door policy and a hands-on leader who
2 could often be seen riding through the Village checking on the
3 community he loved; during snow season, it was not unusual to
4 see him behind the wheel of a truck plowing the streets, a feat
5 that made his family and staff very nervous; and

6 WHEREAS, The phrase "Home Is Where the Heart Is" described
7 William Shaw's consummate love for Dolton; he believed in
8 inclusion and appointed the Village's first African-American
9 police chief, the first female and African-American village
10 attorney, and the first African-American chief of staff; he had
11 the village build a beautiful waterfall at the corner of
12 Lincoln and Park, held the summer Cascade of Jazz events in
13 front of the village hall, and encouraged numerous businesses
14 to make Dolton their home; and

15 WHEREAS, William Shaw's dynamic, visionary leadership,
16 coupled with his passion for seniors, led him to secure funding
17 to modernize the Dorchester Senior Center and Banquet Facility;
18 his most recent success was securing a contract with
19 Food-4-Less supermarket to locate at Sibley and Greenwood,
20 where construction is now in progress; and

21 WHEREAS, William Shaw's concern for global issues has
22 always been evident; he and the Village frequently hosted Mayor
23 Kofi Adjei Ntim of Kadjebi, Ghana, Dolton's sister city; many

1 discussions centered on how Dolton could help build a library
2 for their children; in 2007, Mayor Shaw sent a delegation of
3 four to Ghana to better understand their culture and customs,
4 as well as attend their 50th anniversary of independence from
5 British rule; in the late 1990s, Mayor Shaw welcomed to the
6 Village another African dignitary, His Royal Highness, Oba
7 Aromolaran II, Owa of Ijeshaland, Nigeria; and

8 WHEREAS, Just days after catastrophic Hurricane Katrina
9 blasted New Orleans and its surrounding areas, William Shaw
10 organized a relief effort that provided twenty-two truckloads
11 of food and supplies to the victims; he held a similar drive to
12 provide help for the victims of Haiti's devastating flood; and

13 WHEREAS, An avid golfer, and to let him tell it, "the best
14 in Illinois", William Shaw was known to challenge all comers;
15 in his retirement from the legislature, he spent a good portion
16 of his time with his twin brother and friends accompanying him
17 to various golf courses around Chicago, or to his Orlando home,
18 to enjoy the sun and shoot a few rounds; and

19 WHEREAS, Well-known as culinary experts, William Shaw and
20 his brother Robert had daily and weekly cook-off competitions
21 on recipes from the Food Channel; of the two, the Mayor was
22 indeed the better golfer, but despite the mayor's denial, his
23 twin brother Robert holds the cook-off title; and

1 WHEREAS, Mayor William Shaw often spoke of how blessed he
2 was; he began his journey in Hope, Arkansas, and took his final
3 bow in Dolton, Illinois; all the critically important work he
4 did in-between allowed him to leave behind an impressive
5 legacy; his accomplishments are forever etched in time; when
6 God called his name, Mayor Shaw passed away quietly in his
7 Dolton home; and

8 WHEREAS, His parents, as well as three brothers, preceded
9 him in death; he was also preceded in death by Melanie Green,
10 for whom he was a loving father figure; and

11 WHEREAS, At his time of his passing and by his side were
12 his long time and truly dedicated companion, Ms. Deborah Green;
13 his twin brother and closet confidant, Commissioner Robert
14 Shaw; and his faithful son, Victor Andre Shaw; he is also
15 survived by his sister, Bobby Shaw Brown; his daughter, Gina;
16 his son, Shawn; his granddaughters, Ashley Staples and Asante
17 Norton; his grandson and namesake, William "Little Bill" Skyler
18 Shaw; and his hundreds of other family members and friends;
19 therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
21 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
22 mourn, along with his family and friends, the passing of

1 William "Bill" Shaw; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
3 presented to the family of William "Bill" Shaw as a symbol of
4 our sincere sympathy.