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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 John "J.D." Edwards, who passed away on November 8, 2007; and

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WHEREAS, John Edwards was born on January 11, 1930 in Sunflower County, Mississippi; his parents were Clara and Shalmus Edwards Sr.; he married his high school sweetheart, Erma Lee Black, in 1950; and

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WHEREAS, John Edwards developed a love of music as a child in the 1940's when he learned to play the saxophone; his love of music led him to a music scholarship to Jackson State College in Jackson, Mississippi; and

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WHEREAS, John Edwards moved with his wife to Chicago in 1952; shortly after his move to Chicago, he gained employment with the Belt Railroad Company, where he served as a switchman for 12 years; and

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WHEREAS, After his tenure with the Belt Railroad Company, John Edwards began a new career as an agent, then as a manager, with the National Life Insurance Company; he was honored as a "Millionaire Salesman" for 10 consecutive years during his career there; and

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1 WHEREAS, In 1974, John Edwards retired from the National
2 Life Insurance Company and opened a retail clothing business,
3 which still provides a valuable service to the Roseland
4 community after 33 successful years; and

5 WHEREAS, John Edwards was actively involved in many
6 community organizations; he served as Chairman of the Board of
7 Directors for the Chicago South Chambers of Commerce; he was
8 the founder and president of the Roseland Business Development
9 Council, serving from 1979 until his death; he was the
10 treasurer of the Board of Trustees for Roseland Community
11 Hospital from 1988 until 1999; he also served as vice-president
12 of the Neighborhood Housing Service of Chicago in Roseland
13 until his death, among many other organizations he served
14 during his lifetime; and

15 WHEREAS, John Edwards was the recipient of many awards in
16 recognition of his many contributions to the community; he was
17 the recipient of the Top Hat Club Award from 1973 to 1983, the
18 Hometown Hero Award in 2003, and the 2006 Chicago Senior
19 Citizen Hall of Fame Award; and

20 WHEREAS, John Edwards was preceded in death by his parents,
21 Clara and Shalmus Edwards Sr., and his wife, Erma Lee Black;
22 and

1 WHEREAS, John Edwards is survived by his children,
2 Gwendolyn Edwards-Osborne, Clara Lavizzo, John Edwards Jr.,
3 and LeDall Edwards; his grandchildren, Janeen Osborne, Timiko
4 Lavizzo, Andrea Osborne, John Edwards III, and Leda Edwards;
5 his 8 great-grandchildren; and his many nieces, nephews,
6 relatives, and friends; therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL
8 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with
9 his family and friends, the passing of John Edwards; and be it
10 further

11 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
12 presented to the family of John Edwards as an expression of our
13 sympathy.