



SR0286

LRB096 12856 GRL 26611 r

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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 Sam Ackerman of Hyde Park, who passed away on May 1, 2009; and

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WHEREAS, Sam Ackerman began his career as an activist early in his life, organizing interfaith gatherings and meetings of black and white students during his years as a high school student in Stamford, Connecticut in the early 1950s; and

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WHEREAS, After high school, Sam Ackerman moved on to Cornell University, where he worked to fight housing discrimination and became active in student politics; during his time at Cornell, he met his first wife, Carol June-Washington, whom he married in 1954; he then took a job at the federal Civil Service Commission, where he had some difficulty getting a security clearance because of a letter he had written to the Cornell student newspaper supporting folk singer Pete Seeger's right to perform on campus; and

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WHEREAS, By the 1960s, Sam Ackerman had found his lifelong home in Hyde Park; he helped organize a Chicago contingent for the 1963 March on Washington and his five children grew up going to marches and rallies; in 1970, he married his second wife, Martha; and

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1           WHEREAS, After he helped Harold Washington to become the  
2 city's first black mayor of Chicago, Sam Ackerman landed his  
3 second government job as Chicago's deputy director for  
4 personnel; and

5           WHEREAS, Sam Ackerman was a leader in the Independent  
6 Voters of Illinois-Independent Precinct Organization; he was  
7 also elected to the local school council at Kenwood Academy  
8 High School and worked on campaigns for U.S. Representative  
9 Danny Davis and U.S. Senator Carol Moseley Braun; he was  
10 involved in the Hyde Park Jazz Society; he also helped launch  
11 his community's December 31 Neighbor's Eve celebrations and,  
12 for years, held New Year's Day gatherings in his spacious condo  
13 that attracted as many as 150 people who came for his homemade  
14 eggnog; and

15           WHEREAS, Sam Ackerman is survived by his sons, Joseph and  
16 David; his daughters, Valerie, Jodie, and Anna; his brother and  
17 sister; and his nine grandchildren; therefore, be it

18           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL  
19 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with  
20 his family and friends, the passing of Sam Ackerman; and be it  
21 further

1           RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
2 presented to the family of Sam Ackerman as an expression of our  
3 sympathy.