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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 Gilbert Ellman "Mr. Music" of Naperville, who passed away on April 30, 2010; and

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WHEREAS, Mr. Ellman played alto and tenor sax, flute, and clarinet in Chicago ballrooms such as the Trianon on the South Side and the Melody Mill in North Riverside; he played in orchestras backing performers including Patti Page, Milton Berle, Phil Silvers, and future President Ronald Reagan; he opened Ellman's Music Store at 218 S. Wabash in 1958, moved it to Van Buren Street and then, in 1963, to Main Street in Naperville, where Ellman's Music Center became a fixture; and

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WHEREAS, He was born to a German father and an Austrian mother in Chicago's Gage Park neighborhood in 1925; Mr. Ellman fell in love with music when his parents scraped together the money to buy him a horn; Mr. Ellman became a concert master at Tilden High School, graduating in 1943 and starting his first business at age 18: a Berwyn shop that serviced radios and other electronic equipment; and

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WHEREAS, During World War II, he was a member of the Coast Guard Band; then, he apprenticed as a repairman with Leo Cooper in Chicago and worked as a repair technician for Tommy Dorsey

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1 and Benny Goodman when they brought their big bands to Chicago;
2 he also managed the Band Instrument Department for Carl Fischer
3 Music in Chicago; and

4 WHEREAS, He started the Aristocraft Bongo Factory, with
5 business partner Jim Tadra, and sold thousands of bongos
6 internationally; he invented and patented musical accessories,
7 as well as Volksboat lightweight speed boats and Hiker walking
8 sticks; and

9 WHEREAS, Mr. Ellman taught musical instrument repair at
10 DePaul University, what was then called Illinois State College
11 and Vandercook University; he met his wife on a trip he
12 arranged for DePaul music students in 1956; she was a student
13 who liked to play the baritone horn and the French horn; they
14 married in 1959 and they kept making music together, playing in
15 the Naperville Municipal Band; and

16 WHEREAS, He faithfully attended his son Peter's Tuesday
17 night performances at Jilly's in Naperville and kept up his
18 membership of the Chicago Musicians Union Local No. 10208 for
19 more than 60 years; Mr. Ellman served as vice president of the
20 Naperville Chamber of Commerce for three terms, as well as
21 co-chairman of the town's Last Fling celebration; and

22 WHEREAS, Gilbert Ellman is survived by his wife, Joan; his

1 children, Susan, Michael, and Peter; and by his eight
2 grandchildren; therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL
4 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with
5 his family and friends, the passing of Gilbert Ellman; and be
6 it further

7 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
8 presented to the family of Gilbert Ellman as a symbol of our
9 sincere sympathy.