



SR1675

LRB098 23364 MST 62488 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 Merritt William Sprague of Hull, who passed away on October 4, 2014; and

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WHEREAS, Merritt Sprague was born in Quincy on December 20, 1933 to John W. and Ella L. (nee Long) Sprague; he graduated from Hannibal High School in Hannibal, Missouri, and he earned a degree in agriculture science from the University of Illinois, where he was a member of the FarmHouse International Fraternity; after college, he served in the United States Army, achieving the rank of captain; he married Patricia Ann Paxton on July 3, 1955 in Pittsfield; upon his return to the family farm in 1956, he served as company commander of the Quincy Army Reserve Unit; and

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WHEREAS, Merritt Sprague had a passion for promoting agriculture within his community; he served as a 4-H leader for many years and served as a member of the Pike County Farm Service Board; he was Vice-Chairman of the Illinois Farm Bureau Young Farmers Committee and was also Vice-Chairman of the American Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee; in 1969, he was appointed to the chairmanship of the Illinois State Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service Committee; and

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1 WHEREAS, After 25 years of active farming, Merritt Sprague
2 was called upon to serve as Deputy Administrator for Commodity
3 Operations in the Reagan Administration; he was then called
4 upon to become the manager of the Federal Crop Insurance
5 Corporation; he testified in front of the United States
6 Congress routinely during his tenure in Washington, where he
7 was an advocate for American agriculture; during President
8 George H. W. Bush's administration, he served as the Deputy
9 Director of the Office of Program Analysis for the U.S.
10 Department of the Interior; and

11 WHEREAS, Merritt Sprague returned home to resume
12 management of the family farm; during this time, he served as
13 chairman of the Mid-America Intermodal Authority Port, where he
14 worked tirelessly to promote the development of an intermodal
15 port terminal in the Quincy area, which is ongoing today; and

16 WHEREAS, Merritt Sprague served on the Pike County Mental
17 Health Board; he was an active member of the Hull Lions Club
18 and was a lifelong member of the United Baptist Church of Hull
19 and Kinderhook, where he not only taught many Sunday school
20 classes but also served as deacon; and

21 WHEREAS, Merritt Sprague was preceded in death by his
22 parents and his son, Philip Randall "Randy" Sprague; and

1 WHEREAS, Merritt Sprague is survived by his wife, Patricia;
2 his 2 sons, Marvin Kent "Mark" (Lisa) Sprague and Merritt
3 Andrew Sprague; his 2 granddaughters, AnnaMarie (Jason) Hanes
4 and Dr. Mallory (Adam) Perrine; his grandson, Marine Lt.
5 Jeffrey (Kelsi) Neese; his great-grandson, Paxton Kent Hanes;
6 his brother, John Kent (Margaret) Sprague; his 2 nephews, James
7 and Paul Sprague; and his niece, Cynthia Dreier; therefore, be
8 it

9 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL
10 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
11 Merritt William Sprague, and extend our sincere condolences to
12 his family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it
13 further

14 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
15 presented to the family of Merritt Sprague as an expression of
16 our deepest sympathy.