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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 Pastor Willis Allen Bruce of Alton, who passed away on May 26, 2016; and

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WHEREAS, Pastor Bruce was born in St. Louis, Missouri to Adelaide Irene (Purcell) and Captain Donald Frances Bruce on August 14, 1921; he was educated in St. Louis and Alton public schools and enlisted in the United States Army shortly after his 19th birthday; he served in World War II with the 3443rd Quartermaster Truck Company until his Honorable Discharge as a Sergeant in 1945; he fought in battles and campaigns in Papua New Guinea, and the East Indies; he was a decorated soldier receiving multiple ribbons and badges for his courage and bravery, including three Battle Stars and six Overseas Bars; he married Juanita Katheryn Merriweather at Campbell Chapel AME Church in Alton on June 2, 1946; and

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WHEREAS, Pastor Bruce retired from Laclede Steel in Alton after over 30 years; and

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WHEREAS, Pastor Bruce became an ordained minister in the early 1970s; he was Pastor of Salem Baptist Church in Alton for 39 years; and

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1 WHEREAS, Pastor Bruce was the youngest of nine children:
2 Francis, Adelaide, Jane, Donald Jr., Irvin, John, Robert, and
3 Melvin; and

4 WHEREAS, Pastor Bruce was preceded in death by his wife of
5 64 years, Juanita; and

6 WHEREAS, Pastor Bruce is survived by his daughters, Ruth
7 Ann Bruce Wilson (William Johnson) and Diane Irene Bruce Ross;
8 his sons, Charles Allen (Sandra) Bruce and Donald Madison
9 Bruce; his grandchildren, Thomas C. Wilson Jr., Jerome M.
10 Wilson, Diane B. Wilson, Delano B. Ross III, Jason B. Ross,
11 Lyndsay N. Bruce, Gerad D. Bruce, and India J. M. Bruce; his
12 great-grandchildren; and a host of friends, neighbors,
13 brothers, and sisters; therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL
15 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
16 Pastor Willis Allen Bruce, and extend our sincere condolences
17 to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be
18 it further

19 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
20 presented to the family of Pastor Bruce as an expression of our
21 deepest sympathy.