



SR0091

LRB104 11904 LAW 21995 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 J. Sam Garnati of Herrin, who passed away on January 2, 2025; and

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WHEREAS, Sam Garnati, the son of Sylvia (Pellegrini) Garnati and Charles Garnati, was born in Herrin on November 15, 1923; he attended St. Mary's Grade School and graduated from Herrin High School in 1942; he served in the U.S. Army during World War II from March 1943 to March 1946, and he was stationed overseas for 18 months; he first served in the First Army and then was transferred to General George S. Patton's Third Army Division, beginning his military career as an infantryman and later serving as an ambulance driver; he married Helen Hemlock at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church in Herrin on April 13, 1944, and she preceded him in death on March 27, 2000; and

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WHEREAS, Sam Garnati joined the Illinois State Police in March 1949, and he was promoted to corporal in 1959 and then sergeant in 1964; he later worked as the desk sergeant for District 13 in DuQuoin until he retired after 34 years of service on December 31, 1982; and

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WHEREAS, Sam Garnati was elected as the first chairman of

1 the newly formed Shawnee Division of the Illinois Police  
2 Association (IPA) in 1956; he later served as president of the  
3 IPA statewide from 1988-1989, becoming the third state trooper  
4 to ever hold this honor during the organization's 100-year  
5 history; he became the first person to be awarded the IPA  
6 Lifetime Achievement Award in 2019; and

7 WHEREAS, Sam Garnati belonged to several organizations and  
8 participated in numerous community activities; he was a  
9 lifelong member of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church,  
10 where he served as a Eucharistic minister; he was a Democratic  
11 precinct committeeman, a member of the Williamson County  
12 Sheriff's Merit Board, a 3rd and 4th degree member of the  
13 Knights of Columbus, an active member of the Herrin American  
14 Legion where he presented the annual American Legion Award to  
15 the 8th grade graduating classes, and a member of the Herrin  
16 Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), where he served as head of the  
17 Honor Guard for all military funerals; he participated in the  
18 annual HerrinFesta Italiana activities, serving as the grand  
19 parade marshal in 2002, and he was a member of the Bocce Ball  
20 Committee; and

21 WHEREAS, Sam Garnati volunteered at the Williamson County  
22 Child Advocacy Center and participated in its annual  
23 fundraiser, Santa's Gift House; he also served on the Herrin  
24 Community Food Pantry Board of Directors; he and his wife,

1 Helen, were founding members of the food pantry, and its  
2 building was renamed the Garnati Building in honor of his late  
3 wife in August 2000; and

4 WHEREAS, Sam Garnati and his wife were named Citizens of  
5 the Year by the Herrin Chamber of Commerce in 1998; and

6 WHEREAS, Sam Garnati was preceded in death by his wife;  
7 his son, Charles "Chuck" Garnati; his parents; his sisters,  
8 Anna Mae Wells and Rose Smith; and his nephew, Randy Wells; and

9 WHEREAS, Sam Garnati is survived by his daughter, Dr.  
10 Karla (Dr. Robert L.) Mees; his grandchildren, Scott Mees and  
11 Elizabeth Garnati; and his great-grandchild, Kiley Rigdon;  
12 therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL  
14 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
15 J. Sam Garnati and extend our sincere condolences to his  
16 family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it  
17 further

18 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
19 presented to the family of Sam Garnati as an expression of our  
20 deepest sympathy.