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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 Robert Carl "Bob" Ericksen, who passed away on January 29, 2025; and

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WHEREAS, Bob Ericksen was born to Helen and Carl Ericksen outside of Seattle, Washington on September 17, 1941; he spent his childhood exploring the woods and other places of nature; he worked various odd jobs in pursuit of his education, and he received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Washington and his Master of Fine Arts in Painting and Metal Smithing from Cranbrook Academy of Art, where he also met his wife, Joan; and

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WHEREAS, Bob Ericksen taught in the art department of Everett Community College in Everett, Washington, in the humanities department of City Colleges of Chicago, and in the art department of Eureka College; and

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WHEREAS, In the 1960s and 1970s, Bob Ericksen and his wife organized on the South Side of Chicago, where they worked alongside activists, educators, and storytellers to create opportunities for communities too often overlooked; and

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WHEREAS, Bob Ericksen and his wife had a passion for

1 storytelling and cultural preservation, which led them to the
2 Blackfeet Reservation in Montana where they worked to document
3 and share the rich traditions of the Blackfeet Nation; through
4 photography, film, and advocacy, they helped ensure that the
5 voices of the Blackfeet people were preserved and heard, and
6 they created the documentary *The Sun Gave Man the Power*; and

7 WHEREAS, In their work, Bob Ericksen and his wife were
8 inspired by some of the most brilliant minds of their time;
9 they collaborated with many, including R. Buckminster Fuller,
10 and were regular guests on the Studs Terkel radio show; and

11 WHEREAS, Bob Ericksen and his wife founded The Sun
12 Foundation in 1973 to serve as a sanctuary for creativity,
13 science, and conservation; thousands of children and artists
14 found their place in the world through programs offered by the
15 Foundation, including Art & Science in the Woods and the Clean
16 Water Celebration; and

17 WHEREAS, Bob Ericksen had a keen eye for line and color,
18 exploring photography, painting, metallurgy, and printing; and

19 WHEREAS, Bob Ericksen was a force of nature, an artist, an
20 educator, an activist, a visionary, and a man who turned
21 laughter into an art form; he not only created and taught but
22 always had to know how everything worked; he had a great

1 reverence for his tools and believed that every problem had a
2 solution, often finding or making the perfect tool for the
3 job; and

4 WHEREAS, Bob Ericksen is survived by his wife of 57 years,
5 Joan; his son, Brett Root Ericksen; his brother, Ron (Joanne)
6 Ericksen; his nephew, Dean (Mary) Ericksen; and his
7 great-niece and great-nephew, Althea Ericksen and August
8 Ericksen; therefore, be it

9 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL
10 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
11 Robert Carl "Bob" Ericksen and extend our sincere condolences
12 to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be
13 it further

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