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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 Sgt. Jose Duenez Jr. of Joliet, who passed away on March 25, 2025 while serving his country; and

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WHEREAS, Sgt. Duenez was born to Jose and Leticia (Quintero) Duenez in Joliet on April 8, 1999; he was one of six children and was affectionately known as "Junior"; he developed a deep commitment to his faith after participating in a missionary trip and maintained that faith throughout his life; he enlisted in the U.S. Army after graduating from high school in 2017; and

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WHEREAS, Sgt. Duenez was often recognized by his peers and superior officers as a trustworthy and dedicated soldier during his seven-year military career; he graduated from the Army Basic Leader Course and the Tracked Vehicle Recovery Operations Course; he was promoted five times over the course of his service, ultimately reaching the rank of staff sergeant in November of 2020; he served in three overseas deployments, to Poland in 2019, Germany in 2022, and Lithuania in 2025; at the time of his passing, he was scheduled to attend the Advanced Leaders Course; and

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WHEREAS, Sgt. Duenez was most recently serving in

1 Lithuania in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve as a M1
2 Abrams tank system mechanic with the U.S. Army 1st Armored
3 Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, 5th Squadron, 7th
4 Cavalry Regiment out of Fort Stewart, Georgia; and

5 WHEREAS, Sgt. Duenez's awards and decorations include two
6 Army Commendation Medals, three Army Achievement Medals, two
7 Army Good Conduct Medals, and a National Defense Service
8 Medal; and

9 WHEREAS, Sgt. Duenez had recently crossed an item off of
10 his bucket list, traveling throughout Alaska with his family;
11 he had started his own fishing YouTube channel and had
12 purchased a home and a boat; he enjoyed sushi and anime and
13 collected mangas as well as katanas; he shared a very special
14 bond with his father, and the two often referred to each other
15 as "partner"; his greatest source of pride was his son; and

16 WHEREAS, Sgt. Duenez was preceded in death by his maternal
17 grandfather, his paternal grandparents, and his niece, Sophia;
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19 WHEREAS, Sgt. Duenez is survived by his wife, Karen Diaz
20 Duenez; his son, Jose Duenez III; his mother, Leticia; his
21 father, Jose; his sisters, Lydia, Jessica, Eva, Rebecca, and
22 Beatriz; his 18 nieces and nephews; and many other loved ones;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, In honor of the memory of Sgt. Duenez, Governor
3 JB Pritzker ordered flags be flown at half-staff, and Joliet
4 Mayor Terry D'Arcy requested that flags throughout his city be
5 lowered to half-staff; therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL
7 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
8 Sgt. Jose Duenez Jr. and extend our sincere condolences to his
9 family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it
10 further

11 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
12 presented to the family of Sgt. Duenez as an expression of our
13 deepest sympathy.