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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 Charles Arthur Schweighauser of Pleasant Plains, who passed away on July 14, 2025; and

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WHEREAS, Charles Schweighauser, the son of Arthur A. Schweighauser and Julia Schweighauser, was born in Alton on June 1, 1936; he graduated from St. Louis Country Day School in 1954; he received a Bachelor of Arts in Literature in 1958 and a Master of Arts in English Literature in 1960, both from Williams College, where he also completed an undergraduate teaching assistantship in astronomy and worked as an assistant in the Admissions Office; he married Suzanne "Suds" (Japha) Kyger in August 1957, and they divorced in 1978; he married Barbara Jensen-Schweighauser on June 14, 1997, and she preceded him in death on April 30, 2024; and

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WHEREAS, Charles Schweighauser, after teaching for a year at his high school alma mater, was hired as the founding director of the James S. McDonnell Planetarium in St. Louis; he also taught astronomy at Washington University in St. Louis, St. Louis University, and the University of Missouri at St. Louis; he served as executive secretary of the Williams College Trustee Committee for the Development of Mount Hope Farm from 1965 to 1971, and he also worked as a research

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1 associate for the Center for Environmental Studies at Williams
2 College; he served as director of the Coalition for the
3 Environment and its associated foundation in the St. Louis
4 area in 1971 and as the project administrator for the heart
5 disease study of St. Louis Heart Association's National
6 Institutes of Health from 1973 to 1974; he also consulted for
7 many entities throughout his career, including the Illinois
8 Environmental Protection Agency and Hanson Engineers; and

9 WHEREAS, Charles Schweighauser joined the faculty of
10 Sangamon State University, now the University of Illinois
11 Springfield (UIS), teaching in the Environmental Studies
12 program in 1973; he started the university's Astronomy program
13 in 1975, and he was also appointed to UIS's English program; he
14 was tenured in 1977, promoted to full professor in 1980, and
15 recognized as a professor emeritus of astronomy and physics,
16 English, and environmental studies at UIS in 2002; even after
17 retirement, he continued to teach university-level courses at
18 the Pleasant Plains branch of the Prairie Skies Library
19 District; and

20 WHEREAS, Charles Schweighauser began the UIS tradition of
21 Star Parties in 1977, which were held on the roof observation
22 deck atop Brookens Library; he drew national attention to the
23 campus when he helped organize a live feed of an annular
24 eclipse to all major television networks in 1994, drawing

1 millions of views; during his tenure at UIS, he helped found
2 and fund the UIS Barber Research Observatory and developed
3 many telescopes, including the first telescope in the world
4 dedicated for use by people with physical disabilities; and

5 WHEREAS, Charles Schweighauser was a board member of the
6 Illinois Symphony Orchestra and an inaugural board member of
7 the National Undergraduate Research Observatory; he was also a
8 member of the American Astronomical Society, a visiting
9 astronomer at Kitt Peak National Observatory, a visiting
10 scientist and educator at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory,
11 and a visiting astronomer and consultant at Big Springs Summer
12 Camp for Boys for 40 years; throughout his career, he earned
13 accolades from UIS, the University of Illinois, and many other
14 institutions; and

15 WHEREAS, Charles Schweighauser produced four
16 documentaries, including The Sangamon River: A Sense of Place;
17 he was a published author of seven books and monographs whose
18 work also appeared in periodicals, including 700 newspapers in
19 Illinois at one time; and

20 WHEREAS, Charles Schweighauser enjoyed fishing for trout
21 and salmon in Alaska, Canada, Labrador, Tierra del Fuego,
22 Argentina, Chile, New Zealand, Mongolia, and Siberia; he and
23 his wife, Barbara, were opera enthusiasts, traveling to the

1 major capitals of Europe and the U.S. for opera performances;
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3 WHEREAS, Charles Schweighauser was a lifelong teacher who
4 looked for the student in almost every person he encountered;
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6 WHEREAS, Charles Schweighauser was preceded in death by
7 his parents and his sibling, Annette Schweighauser-Scallia;
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9 WHEREAS, Charles Schweighauser is survived by his sons,
10 Robert "Bob" Schweighauser and Scott (Liz Ellrodt)
11 Schweighauser; his stepdaughters, Andrea (Kip) Leverton,
12 Deborah (Randy) Rogers-Flinn, and Jennifer (Craig Hocum)
13 Rogers; 13 grandchildren; and one great-grandchild; therefore,
14 be it

15 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL
16 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
17 Charles Arthur Schweighauser and extend our sincere
18 condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved
19 him; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
21 presented to the family of Charles Schweighauser as an

1 expression of our deepest sympathy.