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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 Barbara Theresa "BeBe" Boutte, who passed away on July 17, 2017; and

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WHEREAS, Barbara Boutte was born in Alexandria, Louisiana to Murrell and Blanche Evangeline Toussaint Gonzaque on August 5, 1930; she attended elementary school in New Orleans and Alexandria and high school in Opelousas; she earned a degree in music education from Xavier University (XULA), where she sang in operas and performed nationally in the choir; she married Alvin Boutte during her senior year; and

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WHEREAS, Barbara Boutte began teaching at St. James Catholic High School in Alexandria when her husband was away at Officers Training School with the United States Army; they spent time stationed in California and Kansas; and

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WHEREAS, After arriving in Chicago, Barbara Boutte and her husband launched their successful drug store chain, Independent Drug Stores, Inc.; she was a strong supporter of her husband as he moved from the drug store business and became president and CEO of Independence Bank; and

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WHEREAS, Barbara Boutte and her husband were ardent

1 supporters of Chicago community and cultural organizations and
2 especially the civil rights movement; they often hosted
3 meetings at their home with civil rights and civic leaders; one
4 of her final public outings was the dedication of the Rev. Dr.
5 Martin Luther King Jr. Living Memorial in Marquette Park; and

6 WHEREAS, Barbara Boutte was a member of St. Dorothy Parish
7 and then St. Clotilde Parish; she served on the school board,
8 the leadership committee, the Women's Club, and chaired several
9 church fundraisers; she sang in the choir, playing both the
10 organ and piano for Mass, and performed at other church
11 functions; for years, she served on the National Committee for
12 the Sainthood of now St. Katherine Drexel, the matriarch of
13 Xavier University of Louisiana; and

14 WHEREAS, Barbara Boutte held leadership roles in the
15 Pharmacist's Women's Auxiliary, Chicago State University
16 TAGgers, the March of Dimes, Good Samaritans, the Provident
17 Women's Auxiliary of Provident Hospital of Cook County, the
18 Kennedy-King Choir, the Proscenium Players, the United Negro
19 College Fund's Women's Division, the American Association of
20 University Women, the Lyric Opera-Bravo Chapter, the XULA
21 Alumni Association, the Holy Ghost Catholic School Alumni
22 Association, and the Chicago Federation of Musicians; she was
23 instrumental in raising funds to build the new Provident
24 Hospital, the 53rd Street YMCA, and she worked tirelessly

1 year-round to ensure the success of the United Negro College
2 Fund's Annual Ebony Fashion Show; and

3 WHEREAS, Barbara Boutte was affectionately known as
4 "Mother Too" and "Grand MaMa" to many; she was a phenomenal
5 bridge player and belonged to several clubs for almost 60
6 years: Queen of Diamonds, Tally-Up, Chi Burbs, Grand Slam
7 Ma'ams, the 87th Street Bridge Club, and several others; she
8 enjoyed hosting an annual New Year's soiree, a Halloween gala,
9 bridge parties, and political fundraisers; and

10 WHEREAS, Barbara Boutte was known for her style, beauty,
11 talent, and caring heart; she was also known for her red beans
12 and rice, smothered okra, jambalaya, and gumbo; her recipes
13 were so acclaimed that they were published in The Chicago
14 Defender and praised by all who were lucky enough to partake,
15 including Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the members of the
16 Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Operation
17 Breadbasket, Operation PUSH, the Young Democrats, and many
18 others; and

19 WHEREAS, Barbara Boutte is survived by her children, Janice
20 Boutte, Jeanette (Floyd) Simpson, Gregory Boutte, and Alvin
21 Jr.; her grandchildren, Dennis, Gregory (Rachel), Phillip
22 (Shay), Floyd III, Patrice, Crystal, and Sherida; her
23 great-grandchildren, Darius, Lauren, Dennis, Denise, and

1 Phillip III; her sister-in-law, Irma (Murrell Louis) Hayes
2 Gonzaque; numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends; and
3 her special and devoted friends known as "BeBe's Kids";
4 therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH GENERAL
6 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
7 Barbara Theresa "BeBe" Boutte, and extend our sincere
8 condolences to her family, friends, and all who knew and loved
9 her; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
11 presented to the family of Barbara Boutte as an expression of
12 our deepest sympathy.