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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 Leander "Bob" Martin of Chicago, who passed away on July 26, 2018; and

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WHEREAS, Bob Martin was born in Dubuque, Iowa to Dr. Henry Ambrose and Mattie (Ducano) Martin on February 9, 1919; he was the sixth of nine children; he earned Boy Scout merit badges as a Lone Scout, and his interest in golf was sparked while working at a golf club; he also skied, was a ski jumper, and enjoyed traveling; he graduated from Dubuque Senior High School; he earned a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Iowa State University at Ames; while at Ames, he also earned his pilot's license through the Civilian Pilot Training Program; later in life, he studied computer programming; and

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WHEREAS, Bob "Fox" Martin was a fighter pilot with the Army Air Corps during World War II; one of the Tuskegee Airmen, he received his wings in 1944 and was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant; he served with the 100th Fighter Squadron of the 332nd Fighter Group in the European Theater of Operations; one of the "Red Tails," he flew single-engine planes, including the P-51 Mustang, on long-range bomber escorts and strafing missions to destroy enemy resources; and

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1           WHEREAS, In March of 1945, during his 64th and final combat  
2 mission, Bob Martin's plane was hit by ground fire while  
3 strafing the aerodrome at Zagreb, Yugoslavia, now Croatia; he  
4 was forced to parachute from his burning plane and was rescued  
5 by and spent the next five weeks with the partisans and at an  
6 allied mission before he returned to his base in Ramitelli,  
7 Italy; he earned several service medals, including the  
8 Distinguished Flying Cross, the Purple Heart, and the Air Medal  
9 with 6 Oak Leaf Clusters; he was honorably discharged in 1945  
10 as a First Lieutenant; in the Reserves, he rose to the rank of  
11 Captain; and

12           WHEREAS, After the war, Bob Martin moved to Chicago, where  
13 he met Odette Ewell; they married in 1950; he secured a  
14 position as an electrical engineer with Chicago's Bureau of  
15 Electricity, where he planned and supervised street light  
16 installations; he retired as an Electrical Design Engineer  
17 after 37 years of service; and

18           WHEREAS, Bob Martin was an early member of the Chicago  
19 "DODO" Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., and he devoted  
20 countless hours to preserving the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen  
21 and to promoting interest in aviation careers; he spoke to  
22 groups about the experiences of the Tuskegee Airmen in general,  
23 as well as his personal experiences; for many years, he

1 designed and sewed his own elaborate costumes for DODO's annual  
2 Mardi Gras Ball; he helped to organize scholarship fundraisers  
3 and volunteered with the Young Eagles Flight Program, which  
4 provides free flights in small planes to children ages 10 to  
5 17; he garnered many civilian honors, the most notable being  
6 the Congressional Gold Medal in 2007 and his entry into the  
7 United States Congressional Record on June 10, 2013; and

8       WHEREAS, Bob Martin was an avid golfer and golfed in all 50  
9 states; he was a member of the Divot's Golf Club, where he held  
10 many offices; he was a voracious reader of military aviation  
11 history, the Smithsonian magazine, National Geographic, and  
12 various engineering journals; he wrote poetry and participated  
13 in his residents' poetry group; most recently, he worked  
14 extensively with a co-author on a book about his life; he  
15 mentored many family members; he had a gregarious soul, a zest  
16 for life, a sense of adventure, a quick wit, and a sharp and  
17 curious mind; and

18       WHEREAS, Bob Martin was preceded in death by his brothers,  
19 Clarence, Henry, Thornton, and Joseph; and his three sisters,  
20 Lillian, Vivian (Smith), and Hettie (Stevens); and

21       WHEREAS, Bob Martin is survived by his wife, Odette Martin,  
22 Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, City Colleges of Chicago; his  
23 children, Robert Martin Jr., Gabrielle Martin, Noelle Martin,

1 and Dominique Martin; his grandchildren, Robert Martin III and  
2 Bradley J. Martin; his sister, Delores Owens; and his many  
3 nieces, nephews, grandnieces, grandnephews, great-grandnieces,  
4 great-grandnephews, other relatives, and friends; therefore,  
5 be it

6 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH GENERAL  
7 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
8 Robert Leander "Bob" Martin and extend our sincere condolences  
9 to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be  
10 it further

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