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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 Sylvia Dawn Jones Walton-Alston, who passed away on May 24, 2019; and

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WHEREAS, Sylvia Walton-Alston was born in Chicago on August 30, 1944 and raised by her parents, Rivers and Alma Jones, and her stepfather, John Powell; she attended Forrestville Elementary School and graduated from Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable High School in 1962, the first high school built for African Americans in the City of Chicago; she then attended Los Angeles Community College; and

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WHEREAS, Sylvia Walton-Alston returned to Chicago and spent 34 years inspiring learners and leaders; she worked as the assistant librarian at Dunbar Vocational, Richards, and Spaulding high schools and then spent most of her career as the assistant librarian at DuSable High School; she retired in 2004 but continued volunteering at the school, often driving graduating seniors to college when they had no other means of getting there; and

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WHEREAS, Sylvia Walton-Alston married and later divorced Leo Walton and then married the love of her life, Wilmer Perry Alston, on March 15, 1969; and

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1           WHEREAS, Sylvia Walton-Alston was a member of St. Elizabeth  
2 Catholic Church, the oldest Black Catholic parish in Chicago;  
3 she served as a member and president of the Parish Council; she  
4 organized clothing drives and dress sales, the food pantry,  
5 Breakfast with Santa, and the church bazaar; she became known  
6 for arranging fundraising trips to local casinos; she led the  
7 charge to build a new church in 1987 after the old building was  
8 destroyed by fire in 1930 and the congregation had spent 57  
9 years worshipping in the church's gymnasium; she was recognized  
10 by Pope John Paul II and was named an honorary Nun of the  
11 Blessed Sacrament; and

12           WHEREAS, Sylvia Walton-Alston enjoyed attending functions  
13 with family and friends, dressing up and going out, and staying  
14 current on the latest technology; she was a member of the  
15 Forrestville Block Club and the Coalition to Save DuSable; she  
16 also advocated to save St. Elizabeth Catholic School, where one  
17 of her daughters and most of her grandchildren attended; she  
18 was a longtime member and the corresponding secretary of the  
19 DuSable Alumni Coalition and a top fundraiser for the United  
20 Negro College Fund; and

21           WHEREAS, Sylvia Walton-Alston was preceded in death by her  
22 parents; her stepfather; her daughter, Kellie; and her husband,  
23 Wilmer Perry Alston; and

1           WHEREAS, Sylvia Walton-Alston is survived by her sister,  
2 Nicolette Jones-Turner; her daughters, Brandie (Earl) and  
3 Courtney (Marvis); her stepdaughter, Wilma Theresa (Robert)  
4 Thorn; her grandchildren, Brandon and Elizabeth Miller, Ashley  
5 Patton, Kourtney and Dakota Alston, Alston Wilson, Shanell  
6 McMoris, Mark Lowe, Olivia Morris, and Romel, Rashun, Cassiana,  
7 and Ratisha Cotton; her special nieces, Divina Alston, Valerie  
8 Hunter, and Verlane Franklin; her special nephews, Walter Lee  
9 Turner and Emmerly Burnette; her great-grandchildren, Madison  
10 Washington and Varnell Cotton; and numerous other family  
11 members, her neighborhood family, her DuSable family, and her  
12 church family; therefore, be it

13           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL  
14 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
15 Sylvia Dawn Jones Walton-Alston and extend our sincere  
16 condolences to her family, friends, and all who knew and loved  
17 her; and be it further

18           RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
19 presented to the family of Sylvia Walton-Alston as an  
20 expression of our deepest sympathy.