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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 Gordon "Gordy" L. Ropp of Normal, who passed away on April 14, 2020; and

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WHEREAS, Gordon Ropp was born in Normal to Clarence R. and Mabel (Mohr) Ropp on April 5, 1933; he was helping his father milk cows by the age of six and joined 4-H by the time he was 10, where he proudly displayed his prize-winning Jersey cow, Corianda; and

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WHEREAS, Gordon Ropp graduated from Normal Community High School as valedictorian of his class and from the University of Illinois in 1955; during college, he received his commission as a second lieutenant in the ROTC program and was a member of the Farm House Fraternity; he married Roberta Cutter in 1955, and they returned to the family farm, raising anywhere from 40 to 100 Jersey cattle at a time; and

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WHEREAS, Gordon Ropp was employed by the Funk Seed Company as a young man; he was selected as a delegate to the Illinois Agriculture Association Convention by the McLean County Farm Bureau in 1960 at the age of 27; around the same time, he was state director of the American Dairy Association of Illinois, secretary-treasurer of the Illinois Jersey Cattle Club

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1 Association, and president of the Dairy Herd Improvement
2 Association of McLean County; he served on the executive
3 committee of the American Dairy Association and as captain in
4 his local National Guard; he and Roberta were also selected by
5 the Pure Milk Association as the Outstanding Young Dairy Farm
6 Couple for District 2; and

7 WHEREAS, In 1969, Gordon Ropp accepted the position as
8 Assistant Director of Agriculture in Springfield; in 1970, he
9 became the Director of the Illinois Department of Agriculture;
10 during his time as director, he implemented many new programs
11 and practices while continuing to promote Illinois agriculture
12 across the globe; he was particular proud of the eradication of
13 hog cholera, a highly contagious swine disease; he oversaw the
14 implementation of the Centennial Farm Sign program, which
15 continues today and recognizes Illinois farms which have been
16 in a single family for 100 years; and

17 WHEREAS, Gordon Ropp served as the Illinois State
18 Representative for the 88th District from 1979 to 1993; he
19 served on many committees, including Appropriations, Higher
20 Education, Agriculture, Executive, and Public Utilities; after
21 his time as a representative, he served as the Rural Affairs
22 Liaison to the Secretary of State; and

23 WHEREAS, Gordon Ropp retired in 1999 but remained active in

1 the McLean County community; he worked as a Unit 5 substitute
2 teacher and volunteered his time with a variety of
3 organizations and clubs, including 4-H, the Shriners, the
4 Masons, the Royal Order of the Jesters, the David Davis Mansion
5 Foundation, the Normal Rotary, the Timeless Clovers McLean
6 County 4-H Alumni, McLean County Barn Quilters, the Illinois
7 Jersey Cattle Club, Extension Partners, the McLean County
8 Seniors Golf League, and the Prune Juice Golf League; and

9 WHEREAS, Gordon Ropp received numerous awards and
10 recognitions during his life, including the Clarence Ropp 4-H
11 Family Spirit Award in 2003, the 4-H Volunteer in 2005, and
12 Illinoisan of the Day at the Illinois State Fair in 2010; and

13 WHEREAS, Gordon Ropp was dedicated to 4-H for over 75
14 years; he was an avid fan of the St. Louis Cardinals and the
15 Chicago Bears; and

16 WHEREAS, Gordon Ropp was an energetic and devoted leader in
17 Illinois agriculture with a warm personality and an
18 approachable style; and

19 WHEREAS, Gordon Ropp was preceded in death by his wife,
20 Roberta; his parents; his son, David; and his infant sister,
21 JoAnne; and

1 WHEREAS, Gordon Ropp is survived by his children, Diana and
2 Darren Ropp; his grandchildren, Shana (Kevin Mulloy) Emberton,
3 Jeff Emberton, Troy (Sarune) Emberton, Samantha (Josh)
4 Fairbanks, Savannah Ropp, Sadie Ropp, Domonique Ropp, and
5 Daniel Ropp; his great-grandchildren, Levi Emberton, Wyatt
6 Emberton, Augustus Emberton, Avery Mulloy, and Emma Mulloy; and
7 his brother, Ray (Carol) Ropp; therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL
9 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
10 Gordon "Gordy" L. Ropp and extend our sincere condolences to
11 his family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it
12 further

13 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
14 presented to the family of Gordon Ropp as an expression of our
15 deepest sympathy.