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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 Burton E. "Burt" Swanson Ph.D. of Champaign, who passed away on April 23, 2020; and

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WHEREAS, Burt Swanson was born in Bureau County to Harlan and Evelyn (Wessel) Swanson on November 28, 1939; he grew up on the family farm near Princeton and graduated from Bureau Township High School in 1957 in a class of eight; he attended Illinois State University and then the University of Illinois, where he received his Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Education in 1961; and

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WHEREAS, Burt Swanson joined the Peace Corps and took his very first air flight, traveling to Washington, D.C. for training at Howard University; after training, he took his first international flight to his assignment in Cyprus; he was called home to Washington at the death of President John Kennedy and continued to serve in the Peace Corps as a recruiting officer; and

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WHEREAS, Burt Swanson earned his Master of Science in International Agricultural Development from the University of California-Davis in 1968 and his Ph.D. in development studies from the University of Wisconsin at Madison in 1974; during

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1 this time, he worked with Nobel Peace Prize laureate Norman  
2 Borlaug at CIMMYT (the International Maize and Wheat  
3 Improvement Center) in Mexico; after earning a postdoctorate at  
4 Wisconsin, he accepted a position at the University of Illinois  
5 in 1975, where he remained for his entire academic and  
6 international career; and

7 WHEREAS, Burt Swanson was a professor of rural development  
8 in the College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental  
9 Sciences (ACES) and director of INTERPAKS (International  
10 Program for Agricultural Knowledge Systems), directing and  
11 teaching a series of short courses for international  
12 participants from around the world; he was also a senior fellow  
13 for International Service for National Agricultural Research  
14 at The Hague; and

15 WHEREAS, Burt Swanson had a long and distinguished career  
16 in international agricultural extension and rural development  
17 and is recognized as an international authority in the field;  
18 he traveled around the world, serving in Europe, the Middle  
19 East, Latin America, Asia, Africa, Egypt, and Russia and  
20 working extensively in China and India, with 80 assignments in  
21 over 35 countries; he spent his career working to improve  
22 national extension systems in order to increase agricultural  
23 productivity and food security in developing nations, in an  
24 environmentally sustainable way; among his colleagues, he was

1 known for his intense focus and tireless work ethic; and

2 WHEREAS, Burt Swanson worked with the United States Agency  
3 for International Development (USAID), the International Fund  
4 for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Bank, and the  
5 United Nations Food and Agriculture Office (FAO) in Rome; he  
6 was a founder and the first president of the Association of  
7 International Agricultural Extension Education (AIAEE); he  
8 wrote and edited several books, one of which was translated  
9 into seven languages; and

10 WHEREAS, Burt Swanson provided leadership for the  
11 value-added agricultural research and extension program at the  
12 University of Illinois; he also taught a discovery course for  
13 freshmen at the university and delighted in sharing with new  
14 students his in-depth knowledge and insights about the world  
15 and its problems and what their future roles in that world  
16 might be; he secured a \$9 million dollar grant in 2010 to  
17 establish the MEAS project (Modernizing Extension and Advisory  
18 Services); and

19 WHEREAS, Burt Swanson received numerous national and  
20 international awards, including the University of Illinois  
21 Distinguished Faculty Award for International Achievement, the  
22 Paul A. Funk Recognition Award from the College of ACES, the  
23 C-U International Humanitarian Award, and the Outstanding

1 Service Award from AIAEE; and

2 WHEREAS, Burt Swanson was devoted to his children and  
3 cherished his family and the time spent with them; he was an  
4 extraordinary, generous, and loving grandfather; he loved  
5 attending the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, scuba  
6 diving and swimming, traveling just for fun, enjoying the  
7 beauty of Allerton Park, supporting his favorite causes, and  
8 spending time with his many friends and colleagues; and

9 WHEREAS, Burt Swanson was preceded in death by his parents;  
10 his sister-in-law, Sylvia Swanson; and his son-in-law, Alan  
11 Rankin; and

12 WHEREAS, Burt Swanson is survived by his wife, Iris  
13 (Arend-Frillman); his daughter, Anne Swanson; his son, David  
14 (Sally); his granddaughters, Sophia and Alyssa; his brother,  
15 Roger Swanson; his wife's family, Leslie (Alan) Rankin, Jamie  
16 (Brian) Shamhart, and Scott (Christine) Frillman; his  
17 grandsons, Miles and Seth Rankin, Nicholas, Jason, and Will  
18 Frillman and Cole Shamhart; his nephews, Ronald (Dawn) Swanson  
19 and Peter (Connie) Swanson; and his great-nieces and  
20 great-nephew, Betsy, Erica, Veronica, Nicole, Natalie, and  
21 Nate Swanson; therefore, be it

22 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL

1 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
2 Burton E. "Burt" Swanson and extend our sincere condolences to  
3 his family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it  
4 further

5 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
6 presented to the family of Burt Swanson as an expression of our  
7 deepest sympathy.