



HR0540

LRB102 21178 ECR 30217 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of dedicated community activist Bettye Baker Houston; and

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WHEREAS, Bettye Houston and her family moved to the Roseland-Rosemoor community in 1966, and for the next 55 years, she dedicated her efforts to the area residents, promoting community awareness and pride, while galvanizing the community to address unmet needs; she was married to Herbert Houston for over four decades and was the proud parent of Sebastian and Tasha Baker, who follow in her footsteps by serving as community activists; and

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WHEREAS, Bettye Houston served as a director of the Calumet Center Community Board for Metropolitan Family Services Calumet Center for 38 years and as a Director Emeritus for the past two years; she also served on the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation (NRC) National Advisory Council and the NRC National Resident Round Table; she participated in NRC's national focus group discussions on increasing resident participation in the planning and decision-making process for neighborhood development; she assisted in developing the Back to Basics Program, which provides grants for community organizers/coordinators; she

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1 served on the Community Leadership Institute planning
2 committee and conducted a workshop on mobilizing residents; in
3 1980, Governor Thompson appointed her to serve on the Illinois
4 State Medicaid Advisory Board; during her tenure, she assisted
5 in redesigning the Illinois State Medicaid Program and
6 rewriting the Public Aid Code; she was appointed by three
7 Chicago mayors to serve on the Chicago Community Development
8 Advisory Committee (CDAC); and

9 WHEREAS, Bettye Houston held several leadership positions
10 with organizations such as the Frank I. Bennett Shedd PTA, the
11 Rosemoor Community Association, the Metropolitan Family
12 Services Calumet Center, Roseland Neighborhood Housing
13 Services, the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation, the
14 Chicago State University Community Council, the Roseland
15 Redevelopment Planning Board, the Roseland Mental Health
16 Advisory Board, the Cook County Advisory Council, and the
17 Greater Roseland Area Planning Commission; she was
18 instrumental in planning and facilitating a community-wide
19 planning meeting that pulled all facets of the community
20 together to develop a revitalization plan; this plan resulted
21 in reinvestment in Roseland, including the development of
22 major retail businesses; she recruited numerous volunteers to
23 attend educational workshops; she personally provided
24 leadership training to residents, community stakeholders, and
25 students seeking degrees in Community Development; and

1 WHEREAS, Bettye Houston successfully lobbied for many
2 causes, including for new educational institutions such as
3 Corliss and Julian High Schools, new elementary schools,
4 Chicago State University, and the Carter G. Woodson Regional
5 Library, the elimination of shutting off utility services
6 between November 1 and March 30, the construction of a new
7 fully equipped Roseland Public and Mental Health Center, the
8 improvement of public transportation, the equal distribution
9 of the Chicago Community Development Block Grants to the
10 neighborhoods, the establishment of an FHA reform program to
11 reduce foreclosure rates in Roseland, an effort to end
12 segregation in the Chicago Public Schools that included
13 assisting in drafting the Chicago Public School desegregation
14 plan, the million-dollar renovation of the Roseland YMCA, the
15 funding for the Pullman Bank College Bound Youth Program, and
16 a community NeighborWorks clean up project that attracted the
17 attention of several retail vendors; and

18 WHEREAS, Bettye Houston received numerous awards and
19 recognitions, including the Illinois State Parent Teachers
20 Association (PTA) Life Membership Award in 1977, the
21 Neighborhood Housing Service of Chicago Neighborhood
22 Leadership Award in 1987, the Rosemoor Community Association
23 Dedicated Service Award 25 Years in 1992, being inducted into
24 the 111th Street YMCA Wall of Honor for Outstanding Community

1 Service in 1993, the Roseland Business Development Council
2 Community Leadership Award in 1997, the State Farm Insurance
3 Company and V103 Radio Station Home Town Hero Award in 1999,
4 the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation Dorothy Richardson
5 National Resident Leadership Award in 2002, the Human Resource
6 Development Institute (HRDI) Outstanding Community Service
7 Award in 2006, the Roseland Community Hospital Foundation
8 Community Service Award in 2010, the Metropolitan Family
9 Services Calumet Center Community Service Award in 2011, the
10 Years of Service Award in 2021, the Each One Reach One
11 Neighborhood Leadership Award in 2013, the Illinois State
12 Board of Education Volunteer of the Year Award in 2015, the Pi
13 Alpha Alpha Volunteer Service Award in 2017, and having the
14 Community Impact Award named in her honor in 2019; in
15 September of 2021, the Metropolitan Family Services Calumet
16 Center recognized her at their annual meeting for her
17 steadfast service and commitment to the Calumet Center, the
18 Roseland community, and its residents; therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
20 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
21 we mourn the passing of Bettye Baker Houston and extend our
22 sincere condolences to her family, friends, and all who knew
23 and loved her; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be

1 presented to the family of Bettye Houston as an expression of
2 our deepest sympathy.