



HR1022

LRB102 29854 MST 42001 r

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois General Assembly are  
3 saddened to learn of the death of former Harwood Heights Mayor  
4 Ray Willas; and

5 WHEREAS, Mayor Willas was born to John and Agnes Willas on  
6 March 17, 1932; and

7 WHEREAS, Mayor Willas was a student at St. Fidelis  
8 Elementary School, Tuley High School, and Wright Junior  
9 College; and

10 WHEREAS, Mayor Willas served his country as an engineer in  
11 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the Korean War from 1952  
12 through 1954; and

13 WHEREAS, Mayor Willas worked in the private sector as the  
14 finance director of C.F.S. Continental Coffee and L. Karp &  
15 Sons; and

16 WHEREAS, In 1965, Mayor Willas moved to the Village of  
17 Harwood Heights and received a parking ticket on his car in  
18 front of his new home for not displaying a vehicle sticker,  
19 which was dismissed after a heated discussion with the police  
20 chief; and

1           WHEREAS, Mayor Willas previously served on the Harwood  
2 Heights Zoning Board of Appeals for two years; in 1968, he was  
3 appointed to a vacant Harwood Heights trustee's chair and was  
4 elected to a full term as trustee in 1971; and

5           WHEREAS, In 1973, Mayor Willas was elected as mayor of  
6 Harwood Heights and served in that position until his  
7 retirement in 2001; and

8           WHEREAS, In addition to serving as mayor of Harwood  
9 Heights, Mayor Willas also served as president of the  
10 Leyden-Norwood Park Municipal League, president of the West  
11 Central Municipal League, and as a member of the Illinois  
12 Municipal League Board; and

13           WHEREAS, In 1986, Mayor Willas expressed to the Chicago  
14 Tribune that being the mayor of a small village meant that "The  
15 buck stops here. In a small town, people know who to call when  
16 they have problems...And yes, it delays dinner sometimes, but  
17 I've found what people usually need is just someone who's  
18 willing to listen and help, if possible"; and

19           WHEREAS, Mayor Willas was married to his wife, Barbara,  
20 for 64 years and was the father of Mary Kay Pawlak, the  
21 father-in-law of Gary Pawlak, and the grandfather of Andrew,

1 Brian (Diego), and Kaitlyn Pawlak; therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
3 HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE  
4 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we extend our hearts and  
5 condolences to the family of former Harwood Heights Mayor Ray  
6 Willas; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That we recognize the decades of service,  
8 commitment to community, and hard work that Mayor Willas  
9 dedicated to his home of Harwood Heights, the "island in the  
10 city", which he succeeded in making a great place to live; and  
11 be it further

12 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
13 presented to Barbara Willas, Mary Kay Pawlak, Andrew Pawlak,  
14 Brian Pawlak, and Kaitlyn Pawlak as an expression of our  
15 deepest sympathy.