



SR1276

LRB102 18874 ECR 27598 r

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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 Alice Ruth Clark Brown, who passed away on June 6, 2021; and

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WHEREAS, Alice Brown was born Alice Ruth Clark to Charles and Mattie Clark in Chicago on August 22, 1952; a product of Burke Elementary School, she blossomed into a stellar student at DuSable High School; in 2004, she earned a Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Illinois at Chicago; and

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WHEREAS, As an Andy Frain usher, Alice Brown was noticed by an official for Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus; a year later, in 1972, she became the first Black dancer/aerialist in Ringling's Blue Unit, which was one of the circus' two touring companies; she enjoyed recounting nights of riding elephants and days of living on the circus train, visiting major metropolitan cities and small towns along the way; she and two other Ringling performers were once interviewed on national television by Barbara Walters; after three years, she left the circus; soon thereafter, she became a tour guide at Johnson Publishing Co.'s headquarters in Chicago, where she met her future husband, journalist Geoffrey F. Brown; they married on June 4, 1977 and had two children; and

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1           WHEREAS, After moving with her family to Oak Park in 1986,  
2 Alice Brown began to pursue creative endeavors, acting, music,  
3 and writing; in 1993, she portrayed Nettie in the original  
4 cast of the Black Ensemble Theater's production of Precious  
5 Lord, Take My Hand; later, she sang at jazz open microphone  
6 events across the Chicago area with the stage name "Brandee"  
7 Brown; she played piano for several semesters with the Triton  
8 Community College jazz band; and

9           WHEREAS, Alice Brown had a passion for writing, and she  
10 penned short stories, plays, poems and freelance newspaper  
11 articles; and

12           WHEREAS, Alice Brown's concern for the plights of others  
13 led her to training for substance abuse counseling; she also  
14 donated time to a domestic abuse hot line;; and

15           WHEREAS, Alice Brown was a proud member and vice president  
16 of the DuSable High School Alumni Coalition; in large part due  
17 to the coalition's efforts, the City of Chicago granted the  
18 high school campus landmark status in 2013; she moderated a  
19 conversation with renowned historian, activist, and educator  
20 Timuel D. Black for the Illinois Humanities Council about the  
21 legacy of DuSable High School in 2018, as he was in the  
22 school's first graduating class in 1937; and

1           WHEREAS, Alice Brown is survived by her husband; her son,  
2           Geoffrey Jr.; her daughter, Christina; her brother, Gerry; her  
3           sister, Anna; her niece, Shana; and several cousins;  
4           therefore, be it

5           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL  
6           ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
7           Alice Ruth Clark Brown and extend our sincere condolences to  
8           her family, friends, and all who knew and loved her; and be it  
9           further

10          RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
11          presented to the family of Alice Brown as an expression of our  
12          deepest sympathy.