



SJ0032

LRB103 31670 MST 60161 r

1

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

2

WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate of the 103rd General Assembly of the State of Illinois learned with great sadness of the death of their colleague and friend, Senator Scott Michael Bennett, on December 9, 2022; and

3

4

5

6

WHEREAS, Senator Bennett was born on July 16, 1977 to Dr. Robert and Barbara Bennett in Fort Campbell, Kentucky, where his father was stationed in the U.S. Army; when he was an infant, the family moved to Gibson City, where five generations of his family have worked on their family farm; he graduated from Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley High School in 1995 and then studied history at Illinois State University, graduating in 1998; he then attended law school at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, graduating in 2002; and

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

WHEREAS, Though Senator Bennett could have pursued a high-paying career in corporate law, he returned to his roots and the central Illinois community he treasured, working as an assistant state's attorney in Bloomington-Normal and then in Champaign-Urbana; and

17

18

19

20

21

WHEREAS, Senator Bennett joined the Senate in 2015 as the unanimous choice to fill the vacancy created when Michael W.

22

1 Frerichs was sworn in as the Illinois State Treasurer after
2 serving the 52nd District for eight years; and

3 WHEREAS, Immediately after his appointment to the Senate,
4 Senator Bennett's first act as sitting state senator was to
5 drive to Danville to meet with Vermilion County and Danville
6 officials to discuss how they could work together to spur
7 economic development in the region; and

8 WHEREAS, As the chair of the Senate's Higher Education
9 Committee for the last two years, Senator Bennett fought to
10 provide Illinois' students with the opportunity to be
11 successful; he worked to secure resources for the University
12 of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Parkland College, Danville Area
13 Community College, and all of the State's higher education
14 facilities by advocating for additional funding for need-based
15 tuition assistance, lowering tuition costs and fees, and
16 preventing licensing boards from denying and revoking or
17 suspending individual professional licenses due to student
18 loan default in Illinois; and

19 WHEREAS, Senator Bennett's love for his family farm was
20 evident in the active role he played as the chair of the
21 Agriculture Committee for two years; he even sought a
22 commercial driver's license so he could haul grain in a
23 semi-truck to the area grain elevator from his family's

1 centennial farm during harvest; he could be found returning
2 calls, participating in weekly team meeting calls, negotiating
3 legislation, and much more in the name of service to the
4 constituents of the 52nd District while waiting for the truck
5 to be loaded; and

6 WHEREAS, Senator Bennett's absence has left a big Scott
7 Bennett-sized hole in our hearts forever; we can honor him by
8 taking the time to find common ground, being kind to our
9 neighbors, and doing our best to leave the world a brighter and
10 more compassionate place; and

11 WHEREAS, Senator Bennett prioritized service above self
12 and deeply cared for the 52nd State Senate District; however,
13 his greatest love was for his family, his wife of 20 years,
14 Stacy, and his children, Sam and Emma, who served as his rock
15 and heart in every action he took; he would often forgo staying
16 in Springfield after long session days to go home and be with
17 his family; and

18 WHEREAS, Senator Bennett dedicated his life to public
19 service and giving back to his community, particularly
20 Champaign and Vermilion counties; and

21 WHEREAS, Senator Bennett believed in the spirit of
22 bipartisanship and providing full representation for all

1 communities, whether they agreed with him or not, which led to
2 him spending many hours driving between the Champaign-Urbana
3 and the Danville area and throughout the 52nd Legislative
4 District; therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL
6 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF
7 REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING HEREIN, that we designate
8 Interstate 74 east of US 45 in Champaign-Urbana to the Indiana
9 border as the "Senator Scott M. Bennett Memorial Highway"; and
10 be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the Illinois Department of Transportation
12 is requested to erect at suitable locations, consistent with
13 State and federal regulations, appropriate plaques or signs
14 giving notice of the name "Senator Scott M. Bennett Memorial
15 Highway"; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be
17 presented to the family of Senator Bennett, his wife of 20
18 years, former Senator Stacy Bennett, and his children, Sam and
19 Emma, as an expression of our sincerest condolences for the
20 loss of their loved one and our dear friend.