



SR0252

LRB103 31363 LAW 58957 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 Josie (Brown) Childs of Chicago, who passed away on February 13, 2023; and

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WHEREAS, Josie Childs was born to Julia Brown and Charles Washington in Clarksdale, Mississippi on October 13, 1926; she graduated high school and attended LeMoyne-Owen College in Memphis, Tennessee before moving to Chicago in the late 1940s; she married James "Jack" Childs Sr. in 1968; and

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WHEREAS, Josie Childs was a civic leader, an activist, and a community organizer; she worked for the congressional campaigns of Abner Mikva, Ralph Metcalfe, Rod Blagojevich, and Harold Washington; she served as an Illinois organizer for the presidential campaigns of Adlai Stevenson Sr., John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, and Jimmy Carter; she also served as a delegate of the Illinois Democratic Party at the 1980 Democratic National Convention (DNC) in New York City; she additionally worked with the late Harold Washington on his successful mayoral campaigns in 1977 and 1983; and

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WHEREAS, Josie Childs was committed to the arts and cultural excellence of the City of Chicago; after leaving her administrative position with the City of Chicago's Special

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1 Events and Cultural Affairs Departments, she created and  
2 promoted various events, including an acknowledgment event for  
3 Great Lakes African American naval musicians entitled "The  
4 Great Lakes Experience" and the Ellington International  
5 Conference; she also guided many young people into becoming  
6 civic minded and was involved in supporting programs at such  
7 institutions as Columbia College Chicago, Goodman Theater, and  
8 Harold Washington College; and

9 WHEREAS, Josie Childs founded The Mayor Harold Washington  
10 Legacy Committee (MHWLC) in 2013, where she served as  
11 president until her passing, remaining passionate on ensuring  
12 the legacy of Mayor Harold Washington; she was a member of  
13 several organizations, including The Chicago Urban League, the  
14 National Association for the Advancement of Colored People  
15 (NAACP), the Friends of the Chicago Public Library Board,  
16 Planned Parenthood, T.R.U.S.T. Inc., the Know Your Chicago  
17 Board, the Joint Negro Appeal, the National Board of Council  
18 on Lay Life and Work, the Duke Ellington Society, the  
19 Executive Service Corps, and the Christ Hospital Nursing  
20 School; she was also the former president of her condominium  
21 board; and

22 WHEREAS, Josie Childs was a founding member of the  
23 Congregational Church of Park Manor, United Church of Christ  
24 (UCC), where both she and her husband served as lifelong

1 members; together, they were national and international  
2 travelers, partners in church, social, and civic activities,  
3 and lovers of fine dining, the theater, the arts, a good card  
4 game, and jazz music; and

5 WHEREAS, Josie Childs received a number of accolades for  
6 her work, including being honored with the Georgia Palmer  
7 Award by Congressman Danny K. Davis in 2013 and being named one  
8 of the Voices of the Civil Rights Movement by the DuSable  
9 Museum and Comcast in February 2019; and

10 WHEREAS, Josie Childs' legacy will live on through her  
11 donation to the Chicago Public Library of the Josie Brown  
12 Childs Papers, a collection of documents consisting of her  
13 family history, her political work, and her efforts to promote  
14 African American cultural and historical awareness; she will  
15 be remembered as deserving of the title "Matriarch of the  
16 Movement"; and

17 WHEREAS, Josie Childs was preceded in death by her  
18 husband; and

19 WHEREAS, Josie Childs is survived by her son, James M.  
20 (Bonnie Collins) Childs Jr.; her grandchildren, James A.  
21 Childs, Claudia L. (Adrien) Houndje, and Elysia R. (L.  
22 Almestica) Childs; and her great-grandchildren, Semenou,

1 Mense, Fifa, and Hontongou Houndje; therefore, be it

2       RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL  
3 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
4 Josie (Brown) Childs and extend our sincere condolences to her  
5 family, friends, and all who knew and loved her; and be it  
6 further

7       RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
8 presented to the family of Josie Childs as an expression of our  
9 deepest sympathy.