



SR1012

LRB103 40810 MST 73690 r

1

SENATE RESOLUTION

2

WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois State Senate are
3 saddened to learn of the death of former Illinois State
4 Senator Dr. Merrill William George Ottwein, who passed away on
5 March 21, 2024; and

6

WHEREAS, Dr. Ottwein was born to Oscar John and Hilda
7 (Bardelmeier) Ottwein in Troy on April 24, 1929; and

8

WHEREAS, Dr. Ottwein attended Troy schools; he received a
9 Bachelor of Science in Agriculture with highest honors from
10 the University of Illinois in 1951, a Master of Science in
11 Agricultural Economics from the University of Illinois in
12 1953, and a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine with honors from the
13 University of Illinois in 1956; and

14

WHEREAS, Dr. Ottwein married Grace Schmidt at Frieden's
15 United Church of Christ in Troy on September 2, 1950; and

16

WHEREAS, Dr. Ottwein founded Hawthorne Animal Hospital in
17 Glen Carbon in 1956 and practiced until 1966 when his family
18 moved for a year to Honduras to conduct veterinary and
19 agricultural mission work through the United Church World
20 Ministries; and

1 WHEREAS, Dr. Ottwein campaigned for the Illinois State
2 Senate in 1969 on the slogan of "People Power"; he sought to
3 bring about a more decentralized government to improve the
4 quality of American life upon the principles that education,
5 including vocational training, must be of the highest
6 priority, that our environment and our relations to it must be
7 a constant consideration, and that a morality of contribution,
8 national purpose and unity, and old-fashioned patriotism
9 should be the order of the day; and

10 WHEREAS, Dr. Ottwein won election to an unexpired term in
11 the Illinois Senate in 1969, becoming the first Republican
12 senator from the 53rd District in more than 30 years; and

13 WHEREAS, Dr. Ottwein served on the Education,
14 Conservation, Agriculture, and Public Welfare committees
15 during his tenure in the senate; and

16 WHEREAS, Dr. Ottwein was appointed a member of the
17 Illinois School Problems Commission and the Urban Education
18 Commission and served as chairman of the Committee for
19 Unification and Coordination of Social Services in Illinois;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, Dr. Ottwein introduced legislation to require
22 visual examinations for students in Illinois and for the

1 establishment of a St. Louis Metropolitan Airport, as well as
2 a measure to finance a water pollution control as part of a
3 legislative package supported by Governor Richard Ogilvie; and

4 WHEREAS, Dr. Ottwein, after serving for one term, became
5 involved with developing communities and founded his company,
6 Homebuyer's Relocation Services, with his son, Paul; he also
7 served on numerous industry-related boards and committees; and

8 WHEREAS, Dr. Ottwein's first love was his family, but he
9 also enjoyed singing in various barbershop and vocal groups,
10 playing his trombone in community bands and small ensembles,
11 and researching family history; and

12 WHEREAS, Dr. Ottwein was preceded in death by his parents
13 and his grandson, Dr. Brent Leh; and

14 WHEREAS, Dr. Ottwein is survived by his wife of 73 years,
15 Grace Ottwein; his sister, Audrey Deeren; his children, Ann
16 (Michael) Culp, Amy (Keith) Zagar, Paul (Amber) Ottwein, and
17 Emily Ottwein; his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, John
18 Ottwein and Nicole DeVerter-Ottwein, Adam and Jessica Ottwein
19 (Annabelle and Oscar), Tyler Ottwein and Emma Pieper, Dakota
20 Roper and fiancé Tyler Orgler, Richard and Laura Leh (Devyn),
21 Matthew and Catherine Zagar (Jane and Dylan), Patrick Zagar,
22 Benjamin Ottwein, Bethany and Eric Paulsen (Emmet), Benjamin

1 and Megan Culp (Julia, Wesley, Owen), Nathan and Pamela Culp
2 (Clayton), and Gregory and Victoria Culp (Brentleigh and
3 Elisabeth); and numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews;
4 therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL
6 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
7 Dr. Merrill William George Ottwein and extend our sincere
8 condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved
9 him; and be it further

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