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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, State Representative Monique D. Davis and the members of the House of Representatives of the State of Illinois learned with regret of the death of Dr. James Walker, the first African-American person to serve as president of the two-campus, 35,000-student Southern Illinois University system (SIU), on Sunday, February 5, 2006; and

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WHEREAS, An Alabama native, Dr. Walker received his bachelor's degree in biology from Alabama State University in 1963, his master's degree in special education from Atlanta University in 1967, and his doctorate in education in 1972 from Penn State University; he was also a graduate of the Harvard University Institute for Educational Management; and

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WHEREAS, Dr. Walker came to SIU from the president's job at Middle Tennessee State University in 2000; he was recognized as one of the most accomplished and dedicated higher education professionals in this country; he is remembered by his successor at SIU as a caring and decent man who accomplished a great deal for Southern Illinois University through his positive outlook on life and his wonderful sense of humor and is credited with providing stable and experienced leadership to the SIU system at a critical point in its history; and

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WHEREAS, During his tenure, SIU received millions of dollars in federal research grants involving coal, agriculture, biofuels, health care, and education; he also oversaw various big-money construction projects, including the \$40 million renovation of the Carbondale campus' Morris Library and work toward the university's \$21 million Cancer Institute planned in Springfield; during his tenure at SIU, private contributions to the university's foundation rose by 30 percent; and

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1 WHEREAS, He spent more than three decades in higher
2 education, his first job was as an assistant professor of
3 education at SIU in Edwardsville; before serving as Middle
4 Tennessee State's president for about a decade, he was provost
5 and vice president for academic affairs at the University of
6 Northern Colorado; therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
8 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
9 we mourn the passing of Dr. James Walker, and we extend our
10 sincere condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew
11 and loved him; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
13 presented to his family as an expression of our deepest
14 sympathy.