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HOUSE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The members of the House of Representatives of the State of Illinois learned with great sadness of the death of their dear friend and colleague Lovana "Lou" Jones on May 8, 2006; and

WHEREAS, She was born March 28, 1938 in Mansfield, Ohio to Louise and Sylvester Walker; and

WHEREAS, She attended high school in Mansfield before earning a Bachelor's degree in business administration from Ohio State University; and

WHEREAS, She moved with her mother to Illinois in 1959, settling in Chicago's Douglas/Grand Boulevard neighborhood; her sister joined them later; and

WHEREAS, She was the mother of Timothy Walker, the late Stephanie Walker, and the late Leslie Walker Boyd; she was a grandmother of seven: Tivaughn Walker, Timothy A. Walker, William Ramone Bradley Boyd, Nicholas A. Boyd, Carolyn N. Boyd, Triston T. Boyd, and Timika L. Walker; and

WHEREAS, She was a member of Metropolitan Apostolic Community Church, serving on its Mothers Board, and a deeply spiritual woman whose faith was a source of great strength and helped to see her through times of adversity; and

WHEREAS, She worked for the United States Postal Service, American Bank, and for the City of Chicago, and she volunteered as a member of innumerable boards and civic organizations; and

WHEREAS, She was long involved in Democratic politics and helped the late Harold Washington, then a United States Congressman, to make history by becoming the first

1 African-American mayor of the City of Chicago in 1983; and

2 WHEREAS, She was first elected to the Illinois House of
3 Representatives in 1986 and re-elected nine times thereafter;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, She was first appointed as an assistant majority
6 leader in 1989; she was the chairperson of the Public Safety
7 Appropriations Committee; she served as a delegate to the 1996
8 Democratic National Convention; she was a revered member of the
9 House Legislative Black Caucus; she was a mentor and
10 inspiration to younger members of the legislature; she was
11 admired by fellow legislators from both sides of the aisle who
12 often sought her counsel and advice; and

13 WHEREAS, She was known for her candor, sharp wit, and
14 willingness to speak the truth to power; she was a formidable
15 debater, equally at ease offering a profound point on a matter
16 of public policy as she was at leaving her colleagues in
17 stitches with a funny story or memorable retort; and

18 WHEREAS, Throughout her life she treated others,
19 regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, disability, income,
20 or sexual orientation, with the same degree of dignity and
21 respect to which she believed that all human beings were
22 entitled, and she demanded that others do the same; she fought
23 discrimination in all its forms; she was a great leader in the
24 struggle for equal rights for minorities and insistent that
25 people of color have a place at the table; and

26 WHEREAS, She firmly held that, as the gospels say,
27 ultimately all will be made to account for how they treated the
28 least among us; she devoted her energies and talents as a
29 legislator to giving voice to the voiceless, comfort to the
30 infirm, and assistance to the poor; and

1 WHEREAS, She leaves an extraordinary legislative legacy;
2 she was passionate in her commitment to criminal justice reform
3 and also an advocate for crime victims, with a special focus on
4 supporting battered women's efforts to rebuild their lives; she
5 secured funding for projects, organizations, and institutions
6 that could make a positive difference for her constituents,
7 including billions more for schools throughout the State; she
8 demanded that minority hiring be a requirement for public works
9 projects; she brought new attention to the problem of
10 postpartum depression; she helped to enact programs that
11 allowed senior citizens to afford their prescription
12 medications and have the dignity of leading independent lives;
13 she led the effort to give ex-offenders a second chance through
14 her work on record expungement for non-violent crimes; she
15 worked to make Illinois a leader in providing health care
16 coverage to the uninsured; she led efforts to arrange the
17 State's purchase of the John Hart Crenshaw House, also known as
18 the Old Slave House, in Gallatin County in 2000 to make sure
19 this part of African-American history in Illinois was
20 understood and appreciated by future generations; and

21 WHEREAS, While she was justly proud of her many
22 achievements as a legislator, she felt that they paled in
23 comparison to her pride in the accomplishments of her
24 grandchildren, including those whose care and raising she
25 undertook after her daughter's passing more than a decade ago;
26 she used her experience to become an advocate for grandparents
27 raising grandchildren and to increase public awareness about
28 the subject and to pass legislation to provide college
29 assistance to help families who find themselves taking on such
30 a demanding challenge at an advanced age; and

31 WHEREAS, The passing of Lovana "Lou" Jones has been deeply
32 felt by many, especially her son, Timothy Walker; her sister,
33 Mary Springfield; her brothers, Harvey Day and Bradley K.
34 Walker; her step-sister, Sylvia Hunter; and her many

1 grandchildren, cousins, nieces, nephews, friends, and
2 neighbors; therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
4 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
5 we mourn the passing of Lovana "Lou" Jones, a true original,
6 one of our own, and a woman whose contributions to the civic
7 life of Illinois and steadfast commitment to her family and the
8 people she served will long be remembered and celebrated, and
9 we extend our deepest sympathy to her family, friends, and all
10 who knew and loved her; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
12 presented to her family as an expression of our sincerest
13 condolences.