



SR1070

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1 SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Illinois State Senator James Meeks was born in
3 Chicago; and

4 WHEREAS, Senator Meeks attended Harper High School in
5 Chicago; he subsequently continued his education at Bishop
6 College in Dallas, Texas, where he earned his bachelor's degree
7 in religion and philosophy; this led to his eventual position
8 as Pastor at the Salem Baptist Church in Chicago, where he
9 oversaw the growth of the congregation to over 22,000 members;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Senator Meeks has been a long-time community
12 activist, supporting many initiatives demonstrating his
13 commitment to social justice, economic and educational
14 equality, and civil rights, including sponsoring educational
15 scholarships for children, feeding the homeless, and
16 supporting drug rehabilitation programs; and

17 WHEREAS, Senator Meeks led the rally to "dry up" the
18 Roseland community in 1998 by collecting votes to close 26 area
19 liquor stores; and

20 WHEREAS, Senator Meeks established the Salem Christian
21 Academy School to provide quality education to hundreds of

1 children from preschool through 8th grade; he started the "It
2 Takes a Village" mentoring program offering guidance and
3 support for pregnant teenagers and teen mothers, which has
4 benefitted countless young people since its founding; and

5 WHEREAS, Senator Meeks served as a member of the Board of
6 Directors for the Chicago Fire Department, the Roseland
7 Community Hospital, the Korean American Merchant Association,
8 and the Olive Branch Mission; and

9 WHEREAS, Senator Meeks, since his election to the Illinois
10 Senate in 2003, has demonstrated his commitment to improving
11 the lives of underserved groups, particularly in his unceasing
12 advocacy for education funding reform and access to affordable
13 housing, while serving on the Senate Committees on Revenue,
14 Elections, Housing & Community Affairs, Human Services, State
15 Government & Veterans Affairs, Commerce & Economic
16 Development, Education, Agriculture & Conservation, Senate
17 Education Funding Reform, Appropriations, and Higher
18 Education; and

19 WHEREAS, Senator Meeks was the chief architect of
20 legislation that sought to eliminate the funding disparity
21 between wealthy and poor communities by shifting school funding
22 from property taxes to income taxes, allowing the State to
23 maintain a consistent revenue source for Illinois children; and

1 WHEREAS, Senator Meeks served as Joint-Chair of the
2 Illinois Legislative Black Caucus; and

3 WHEREAS, Senator Meeks has successfully passed legislation
4 that reduces racial profiling by establishing a camera grant
5 fund to pay for cameras in police squad cars; and

6 WHEREAS, Senator Meeks has supported legislation to
7 decrease recidivism rates and to keep communities safer by
8 encouraging employers to hire ex-offenders; he has also
9 championed legislation that would improve safety by bringing
10 jobs and businesses to economically depressed areas; and

11 WHEREAS, Senator Meeks currently serves as the Executive
12 Vice President of the National Rainbow-PUSH Coalition, where he
13 is able to expand his commitment to social justice, economic
14 and educational equality, and civil rights; and

15 WHEREAS, Senator Meeks has received awards from the Better
16 Funding for Better Schools Coalition, the Illinois Association
17 of School Administrators, and the Illinois Farm Bureau for his
18 outstanding service; and

19 WHEREAS, Senator Meeks is blessed with his wife and
20 partner, Jamell, as well as 4 children and one grandchild; and

1 WHEREAS, Senator Meeks' service to the 15th Legislative
2 District and to the citizens of Illinois displays the utmost
3 integrity, courage, and dedication; establishing a standard of
4 virtue to be observed by all; therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL
6 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we thank Senator James
7 T. Meeks for his years of service to the people of Illinois and
8 honor him with this resolution; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
10 presented to Senator James Meeks as a symbol of our gratitude
11 and with our best wishes for his future endeavors.