



HR0490

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of Illinois Supreme Court Justice John L. Nickels of Sugar Grove; and

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WHEREAS, Justice John Nickels was born on January 16, 1931, in Aurora; his parents were Philip and Gertrude Nickels; and

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WHEREAS, Justice John Nickels grew up in Sugar Grove, where he spent his early educational years in a one-room school house with 14 other students; and

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WHEREAS, Justice John Nickels attended and graduated from Marmion Military Academy; he subsequently continued his education at Northern Illinois University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in business, and Northwestern University, where he studied trust administration; and

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WHEREAS, Justice John Nickels earned his Juris Doctorate from DePaul University before graduating from the National Judicial College; and

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WHEREAS, In 1954, Justice John Nickels entered the United States Army, where he supported his brothers in arms overseas by working in aircraft maintenance; he also trained for work in

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1 control towers while being stationed in both Texas and
2 Louisiana; and

3 WHEREAS, After being honorably discharged in 1956, Justice
4 John Nickels married Merita Smith at Holy Cross Catholic Church
5 in Batavia on June 22, 1957; and

6 WHEREAS, Justice John Nickels and his wife began their new
7 life in DeKalb, where he attended Northern Illinois University
8 until they moved to Chicago during his law school years; while
9 Justice Nickels established his practice, he called Batavia
10 home, although he eventually settled in Maple Park; and

11 WHEREAS, Justice John Nickels was a man who never stopped
12 learning; his iron-clad work ethic was forged on the farm,
13 tending both his fields and livestock; Justice Nickels always
14 strove to be the best, no matter his station in life, and
15 adapted those bedrock values to catapult from a trial lawyer to
16 senior partner in his own firm, where he practiced in DeKalb,
17 Kane, and Kendall Counties; and

18 WHEREAS, Justice John Nickels rose to the challenge of
19 becoming a Circuit Court Judge in 1982 and an Appellate Court
20 Judge in 1990; he eventually retired as a Justice on the
21 Illinois Supreme Court in 1998; and

1 WHEREAS, Justice John Nickels heard and participated in 820
2 cases; he authored 95 majority opinions, 45 dissenting
3 opinions, and 10 special concurring opinions during his time on
4 the Illinois Supreme Court; and

5 WHEREAS, During the 1990s, Justice John Nickels acted as
6 the Supreme Court liaison to the Lawyers Trust Fund, where he
7 worked to increase access to justice for low-income citizens
8 and find funding for legal aid programs throughout Illinois;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, One of the majority opinions Justice John Nickels
11 authored struck down Chicago's gang loitering ordinance as
12 unconstitutional; the case was heard by the United States
13 Supreme Court, which upheld Justice Nickels' decision; and

14 WHEREAS, Through all of Justice John Nickels'
15 accomplishments and accolades, he was forever a farmer at
16 heart; his roots ran deep into the hills and valleys of the
17 countryside and he was never happier than when he was
18 surrounded by his loving family; and

19 WHEREAS, Justice John Nickels will be dearly missed by his
20 loving wife, Merita; his children, Mary (James) Himic,
21 Jacqueline (David) Beane, Margaret (Kenneth) Mangers, Lisa
22 (Joseph) Edmeier, Philip (Sara) Nickels, Ruth Anne

1 (Jean-Baptiste) Philippot, and Gertrude (Peter) Filipos; his
2 23 grandchildren; his great-grandson; his sisters, Jean Morris
3 and Phyllis Nickels; and his many nieces, nephews, cousins, and
4 friends; therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
6 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
7 we mourn, along with his family, friends, and the citizens of
8 Illinois, the passing of Justice John L. Nickels; and be it
9 further

10 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
11 presented to the family of Justice John Nickels as a symbol of
12 our sympathy.