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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of James "Major" Adams of Chicago; and

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WHEREAS, James Adams was born on January 5, 1922 and raised on the Westside of Chicago; he graduated from Crane High School in 1939 and served in Europe during World War II; and

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WHEREAS, After World War II, James Adams worked for various agencies, including Jane Adams' Hull House; he moved into Henry Horner Housing Development in 1955 and began providing gang intervention and prevention programs as a volunteer, then later as an employee, of the Henry Horner Boys & Girls Club; due in part to his efforts, the Henry Horner Boys & Girls Club became the first Boys & Girls Club built in a housing development in the United States; he and other community residents created a drill team which later became the Hornets Drum & Bugle Corps, a nationally renowned 120-member, paramilitary style band composed of young people and troubled youth ages 14 to 21; and

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WHEREAS, From 1959 through 1962, James Adams, with the assistance of the Chicago Area Project, established and developed the Youth Services Committee of the Westside, a grass-roots, voluntary, community-based organization to address the rising juvenile delinquency cases in the

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1 neighborhood; he helped provide direct services and advocated
2 on behalf of the youth and families with schools, courts, the
3 Chicago Police Department, and other institutions; he
4 initiated community organizing and development efforts aimed
5 at improving the quality of life for neighborhood residents;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, James Adams created the community's first
8 re-entry program for ex-felons; he recruited the Salvation Army
9 to provide daily breakfast and lunches and Mile Square Health
10 Center and Bobby Wright Mental Health to provide medical
11 services; during the 1970s and 1980s, he assisted the
12 leadership of Malcolm X in recruiting and increasing student
13 enrollment, developing the community/college music program,
14 and promoting summer youth sports and academic initiatives; he
15 led the Malcolm X College Kwanzaa program for youth residing in
16 the Henry Horner Homes from 1993 to 1996; and

17 WHEREAS, James Adams worked with local businesses,
18 including Rush University to provide job opportunities; he
19 created the original midnight basketball program to keep young
20 men off the streets during prime crime spree hours; his
21 counseling and mentoring aided in reducing the rate of
22 recidivism and his work with Nancy Jefferson and Congressman
23 Danny Davis led to many programs assisting ex-felons; and

1 WHEREAS, James Adams' work has influenced many notable
2 individuals such as Warner Saunders (NBC 5 News Anchor),
3 Reginald "Hats" Adams, Maurice and Verdine White (Earth, Wind &
4 Fire), Dr. Steven Parker, Dr. Vaughn Tatum, Sonny Lumpkin, City
5 College Chancellor Cheryl Hyman, Howard Lathan, Boyse Edwards,
6 Keith Jackson, Arthur Robertson (Founder of the South Shore
7 Drill Team), Bill Freeman; and many other notable leaders; and

8 WHEREAS, James Adams was a recipient of numerous awards and
9 accolades, including the 1996 Shule Ya Watolo Award, the 1998
10 National Jefferson Award/Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Public
11 Service Award, the 2012 President Volunteer Services Award, and
12 the 2013 Governor's Volunteer Award; he continued to actively
13 serve families of the greater Westside late into his life; and

14 WHEREAS, James Adams' work will continue through the agency
15 he founded in 1996, the Major Adams Community Committee (MACC),
16 which along with countless others will keep his vision alive of
17 "Empowering Youth and Families"; therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL
19 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
20 James "Major" Adams, and extend our sincere condolences to his
21 family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it
22 further

1 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
2 presented to the family of James Adams as an expression of our
3 deepest sympathy.