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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 former Illinois Senate President

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Philip J. Rock, who passed away on January 29, 2016; and

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WHEREAS, President Rock was born in Chicago to Joe and Kathryn Rock on May 4, 1937 and grew up on the northwest side;

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he attended Quigley Preparatory Seminary and earned his bachelor's degree in philosophy from the University of St. Mary

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of the Lake in Mundelein; he earned his law degree from the Loyola University School of Law in Chicago; and

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WHEREAS, President Rock was elected in 1971 and served as Senator for 22 years; he was elected Senate President in 1979,

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serving for 14 years, until 1993; and

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WHEREAS, President Rock served as Democratic Committeeman for Oak Park Township for 22 years, and as Suburban Chairman

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for the Cook County Democrats for more than a decade; he also served as State Democratic Chairman; and

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WHEREAS, President Rock authored more than 450 laws during his time in the Senate and championed many causes to improve

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the lives of children, including reforms in special education, child adoption, foster care, domestic violence, and child

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1 support; he also advanced laws to establish the State's first
2 child abuse and neglect reporting act and mandatory insurance
3 coverage for newborns; one of his most cherished and signature
4 accomplishments was when he helped create the nation's first
5 public school for individuals who are deaf and blind; the Glen
6 Ellyn-based school for the deaf and blind was ultimately
7 renamed the Philip J. Rock Center and School in 1987 to honor
8 his efforts; and

9 WHEREAS, President Rock was known as a talented orator and
10 for his decency, honesty, and non-partisan approach, working
11 with everyone irrespective of party affiliation; he was also
12 known for his positive attitude and for trying to do the right
13 thing for the State of Illinois; he hosted many backyard
14 barbecues to promote good will and collegiality among
15 lawmakers; and

16 WHEREAS, After leaving office, President Rock returned to
17 private law practice with his dear friend, Daniel R. Fusco; he
18 later chaired the Illinois Board of Higher Education and headed
19 the Equal Justice Illinois Committee, which fought for
20 increased State funding of civil legal aid; and

21 WHEREAS, President Rock often said he was born a Catholic,
22 a Democrat, and a Chicago Cubs fan, but not necessarily in that
23 order; he was known for his sense of humor, his commitment and

1 devotion to his family, and his profound sense of obligation to
2 helping those in need; and

3 WHEREAS, President Rock is survived by his beloved wife of
4 51 years, Sheila; his children, Kathleen (Steve) Snow, Meghan
5 (Todd) Simmons, Colleen (John) Mueller, and John J. "Jay"
6 (Lauren) Rock; his twelve grandchildren, Emily, Erin, Lily, and
7 Ellie Snow, Kyleigh, Connor, and Maggie Simmons, Jack, Owen,
8 and Kate Mueller, and Julia and Sarah Rock; and his brother,
9 Michael; therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL
11 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
12 former Illinois Senate President Philip J. Rock, and extend our
13 sincere condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew
14 and loved him; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
16 presented to the family of President Rock as an expression of
17 our deepest sympathy.