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SENATE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened  
3 to learn of the death of Dennis McClendon of Chicago, who  
4 passed away on August 8, 2024; and

5           WHEREAS, Dennis McClendon was born to Noble Lester and  
6 Merida McClendon in Texarkana, Arkansas on July 23, 1957;  
7 while in high school, he passed the Federal Communications  
8 Commission (FCC) examination and became a radio disc jockey  
9 under the DJ name "Mark Austin" at KOSY-FM in Texarkana; he  
10 graduated from Texas Senior High School in 1975, where he was a  
11 National Merit Scholar; he majored in urban studies at Tulsa  
12 University; he then attended the University of Texas in Austin  
13 School of Law and passed the Texas bar exam; and

14           WHEREAS, Dennis McClendon relocated to Chicago to begin  
15 working for the accounting firm Arthur Anderson, during which  
16 he developed what became a lifelong love for the City of  
17 Chicago, leading him to become immersed in Chicago history,  
18 architecture, and urban design; he bought an apartment in the  
19 South Loop and played an active role in the South Loop  
20 Neighbors organization, where he held many positions during  
21 his long tenure, including president and vice president of  
22 planning and development; and

1           WHEREAS, Dennis McClendon became known for his work as a  
2 cartographer and designer, impacting generations of Chicago  
3 visitors and residents alike; he worked for the American  
4 Planning Association (APA) and helped produce their monthly  
5 publication; his work on maps for the magazine led to him  
6 establishing his own company, Chicago CartoGraphics; he  
7 created maps for many clients, including the Regional  
8 Transportation Authority (RTA), the Chicago Transit Authority  
9 (CTA), and the Chicago Department of Transportation, where he  
10 designed the original Chicago Bike Map; and

11           WHEREAS, As an expert in Chicago history, Dennis McClendon  
12 was a popular lecturer on a wide variety of topics, including  
13 railroad stations, bridges, World's Fairs, mapmaking, and  
14 Burnham's 1909 Plan for Chicago; he also maintained a  
15 formidable online presence, particularly on Reddit, where he  
16 posted under the screen name "MrDowntown"; he was considered a  
17 reliable source of information and expertise, often providing  
18 concise, academically-sourced answers to settle debates on  
19 r/Chicago and r/AskHistorians, among other subreddits; he also  
20 served as a primary source to local media, including WBEZ's  
21 Curious City radio broadcast and WTTW's Ask Geoffrey  
22 television program, and his Chicago In Maps website has long  
23 been a trusted resource for historic map collections; and

24           WHEREAS, Dennis McClendon was a certified tour guide and

1 vice president of the Chicago Tour-Guide Professionals  
2 Association, and he worked as a volunteer disk jockey for CRIS  
3 Radio in Chicago, which provides daily readings of newspapers  
4 and periodicals for the visually impaired; he was a longtime  
5 member of the North American Cartographic Information Society  
6 (NACIS), where he was founder and host of its annual GeoDweeb  
7 Geopardy competition; he was also a member of the Chicago Map  
8 Society and the Central Electric Railfans Association, and he  
9 served as a longtime mentor to the Chicago chapter of Young  
10 Professionals in Transportation; and

11 WHEREAS, Dennis McClendon was a citizen of the world,  
12 visiting more than 100 countries and sharing his passion for  
13 traveling with family and friends; he had a conversational  
14 knowledge of Spanish, German, and French; during his travels,  
15 he often took pictures of public transportation as well as  
16 outstanding examples of urban design, contributing many of his  
17 photos to dedicated websites; and

18 WHEREAS, Dennis McClendon will be remembered for his  
19 brilliant mind, his extraordinary kindness, his avid  
20 curiosity, and his endless generosity with sharing his  
21 knowledge; and

22 WHEREAS, Dennis McClendon was preceded in death by his  
23 father; and

1           WHEREAS, Dennis McClendon is survived by his mother; his  
2           sister, Denise (Louis) Carriveau; his nephews, David (Katy)  
3           Carriveau and Michael Carriveau; and his niece, Sara (Nick)  
4           Monfries; therefore, be it

5           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL  
6           ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
7           Dennis McClendon and extend our sincere condolences to his  
8           family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it  
9           further

10          RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
11          presented to the family of Dennis McClendon as an expression  
12          of our deepest sympathy.