

1 State of Arkansas
2 94th General Assembly
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By: Senators C. Tucker, J. Boyd, J. Bryant, Caldwell, L. Chesterfield, A. Clark, Crowell, B. Davis, Dees,
J. Dismang, J. Dotson, J. English, Flippo, S. Flowers, Gilmore, K. Hammer, Hester, Hickey, Hill, Irvin,
B. Johnson, M. Johnson, B. King, G. Leding, F. Love, M. McKee, R. Murdock, J. Payton, C. Penzo, J.
Petty, Rice, Stone, G. Stubblefield, D. Sullivan, D. Wallace

10 **SENATE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION**

11 IN RESPECTFUL MEMORY OF DAVID PRYOR, FORMER GOVERNOR
12 OF ARKANSAS AND UNITED STATES SENATOR.

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15 **Subtitle**

16 IN RESPECTFUL MEMORY OF DAVID PRYOR,
17 FORMER GOVERNOR OF ARKANSAS AND UNITED
18 STATES SENATOR.

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21 WHEREAS, on April 20, 2024, former Arkansas governor and United States
22 Senator, David Pryor, passed away at his home in Little Rock, Arkansas, at
23 the age of eighty-nine (89); and

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25 WHEREAS, David Pryor was one (1) of the state's most beloved political
26 figures and remained active in public service in the state long after he left
27 office; and

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29 WHEREAS, David Pryor was born in Camden, Arkansas, on August 29, 1934,
30 and was a third generation Ouachita County resident, where his father,
31 William Edgar Pryor, served as sheriff and his mother, Susan Hampton Newton
32 Pryor, was the first woman ever to seek elected office in Arkansas; and

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34 WHEREAS, David Pryor attended public schools in Camden, Arkansas,
35 attended Henderson State Teachers College in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, and
36 graduated from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville in 1957; and



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2 WHEREAS, along with his beloved wife Barbara, David Pryor founded and
3 published the Ouachita Citizen, a weekly newspaper in Camden from 1957-1960;
4 and
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6 WHEREAS, David Pryor graduated from the University of Arkansas School
7 of Law in 1964, and was admitted to the Arkansas bar that same year; and
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9 WHEREAS, David Pryor started his political career with his election to
10 the Arkansas House of Representatives in 1960, representing Ouachita County,
11 and served until 1966 when he was elected to the United States Congress after
12 winning a special election to the United States House of Representatives; and
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14 WHEREAS, during his time in the Arkansas House of Representatives,
15 David Pryor gained a reputation as being interested in reforming the state's
16 political system; and
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18 WHEREAS, David Pryor focused on helping the elderly and went undercover
19 to investigate nursing homes while serving in the United States House of
20 Representatives from 1966 to 1973, with the Select Committee on Aging being
21 created as a direct result of his efforts; and
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23 WHEREAS, David Pryor was elected governor of Arkansas in 1974, where he
24 continued the modernization of state government and appointed an
25 unprecedented number of African-Americans and women to important positions;
26 and
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28 WHEREAS, David Pryor was elected to the United States Senate in 1978,
29 where he won passage of a Taxpayer Bill of Rights in 1988, which expanded
30 citizens' rights dealing with the Internal Revenue Service and was the
31 legislation David Pryor considered the "cornerstone" of his congressional
32 career; and
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34 WHEREAS, in the United States Senate, David Pryor was known as a true
35 statesman, exemplifying what it meant to be a colleague and approaching every
36 person in the building, no matter their position, with the utmost humility

1 and respect, and also as a great legislator, with former United States
2 Senator Harry Reid commenting upon his retirement that David Pryor was "the
3 single most effective legislator" he had ever served with; and
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5 WHEREAS, David Pryor did not seek reelection in 1996, and he retired
6 from elective office at the end of his term in early 1997; and
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8 WHEREAS, David Pryor remained active in public service after his
9 retirement from the Senate in many ways, including serving:

10 (1) Two (2) years as the inaugural dean of the University of
11 Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service;

12 (2) Temporarily as the chair of the state Democratic Party in
13 2008;

14 (3) On the University of Arkansas's Board of Trustees starting
15 in 2009; and

16 (4) Two (2) years as the Director of the Institute of Politics
17 at the Harvard Kennedy School; and
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19 WHEREAS, David Pryor's long-time colleague and dear friend, former
20 United States Senator and Governor of Arkansas Dale Bumpers, often lovingly
21 lamented that when Arkansas media typed out the name "David Pryor" that their
22 keyboards automatically typed out, "the most beloved political figure in
23 Arkansas"; and
24

25 WHEREAS, David Pryor is survived by:

26 (1) His wife, Barbara Jean Lunsford, whom he married in 1957;

27 (2) Three (3) sons, Mark, David, and Scott;

28 (3) Four (4) grandchildren; and

29 (4) One (1) great-grandson; and
30

31 WHEREAS, after spending more than half a century in public service, the
32 impact of his loss has been felt by many current and former political
33 leaders, with former President Bill Clinton commenting that David Pryor was
34 "one of America's greatest advocates",
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36 NOW THEREFORE,

1 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
2 STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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4 THAT the Senate express sincere condolences to the family of David
5 Pryor and commend his outstanding contributions to the State of Arkansas.

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7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT upon adoption, a copy of this resolution shall be
8 provided to the family of David Pryor by the Secretary of the Senate.

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