



HR0615

LRB104 17765 ECR 31197 r

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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 Ernest Earl Gibson, Ph.D.; and

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WHEREAS, Dr. Gibson, the son of Japhus and Evelyn Gibson, was born in Dania, Florida on August 16, 1928; after his parents' death, he was adopted by his cousins, Reginald and Evelyn Robinson; he attended the Bordentown School in Bordentown, New Jersey; he served in the United States Army during the Korean Conflict; he received a degree in hotel and restaurant management and institutional food service from the Tuskegee Institute, now known as Tuskegee University, where he was initiated into the Gamma Phi Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.; he later received a master's degree and a doctorate degree from Northern Illinois University; he married Carolyn Jean Boddie; and

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WHEREAS, Dr. Gibson, along with his wife, opened the A.G. Gaston Motel and Restaurant in Birmingham, Alabama in 1963; his business became one of many Green Book locations across the South that provided Black people with safe dining and lodging during segregation, and it also became the headquarters and center of activity for the Birmingham civil rights crusade; his establishment hosted leaders, including

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1 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Rev. Andrew Young, Rev. Wyatt Tee
2 Walker, Rev. Ralph Abernathy, and others, as they planned
3 demonstrations, such as the March on Washington, and fought to
4 desegregate public facilities in Birmingham and to gain equal
5 rights for Black Americans; and

6 WHEREAS, Dr. Gibson was the director of Food Services and
7 the Student Union at Arkansas AM&N College, now known as the
8 University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff; after moving to Illinois
9 in 1964, he became director of Food and Campus Services for the
10 Joliet Township High Schools and Junior College, where he was
11 instrumental in inviting and hosting Dr. King for a visit and a
12 rally in Joliet in June 1965; he became one of the original
13 administrators and the first Black administrator at the newly
14 formed College of DuPage in 1966, where he played an important
15 role in increasing the number of minority faculty members; he
16 retired as an executive director of Auxiliary and Business
17 Services and an adjunct professor for the College of DuPage
18 after 30 years of service; and

19 WHEREAS, Dr. Gibson was a life member of Alpha Phi Alpha
20 Fraternity, Inc., and he was involved in the establishment and
21 chartering of the fraternity's Mu Mu Lambda Graduate Chapter
22 in DuPage County in 1976, serving as its first president; he
23 served as president of the local NAACP chapter in DuPage
24 County, vice-president and then president of the Enhancement

1 Organization of Olympia Fields, and president of the Wysteria
2 Homeowners Association for 24 years; he also served as a
3 governor appointee on the committee to make Dr. King's
4 birthday a federal holiday; and

5 WHEREAS, Dr. Gibson was committed to his faith, being a
6 member of the Episcopal Church, the Baptist Church, and the
7 African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church throughout the years;
8 he and his wife were founding members of the DuPage AME Church
9 in Wheaton, and he was a member of Trinity United Church of
10 Christ in Chicago for more than 30 years; and

11 WHEREAS, Dr. Gibson received countless accolades during
12 his lifetime; he and his wife were recognized for their
13 community service when the entrance area and park at Wysteria
14 was dedicated as Gibson Place in their honor in 2020; he was
15 further recognized by the DuPage NAACP and the People's
16 Community Church of Glen Ellyn on January 19, 2025; and

17 WHEREAS, Dr. Gibson was an avid reader and an impressive
18 storyteller; he loved traveling with his wife and family,
19 visiting Europe, Asia, Africa, Canada, the Caribbean, and
20 Mexico, among other locations; most of all, he loved spending
21 time with his family; and

22 WHEREAS, Dr. Gibson was always polite, engaging, and

1 complimentary; he was known for making people feel special,
2 confident, and seen, and he touched many lives with his wisdom
3 and experience; and

4 WHEREAS, Dr. Gibson was preceded in death by his parents;
5 his adoptive parents; his wife, Carolyn; his sister, Evelyn
6 Gibson; his siblings-in-law, Cyril Gibson, Elizabeth Gibson,
7 Richard Boddie, and Lenae Boddie; one nephew; and his
8 son-in-law, Wiley Austin Branton Jr.; and

9 WHEREAS, Dr. Gibson is survived by his daughters,
10 Stephanie Gibson Branton and Dorothy (Steven) Gibson Capers;
11 six grandchildren; two nieces; one nephew; and his bonus
12 children, Katrinka, John, and Kalia; therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
14 HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
15 we mourn the passing of Ernest Earl Gibson, Ph.D. and extend
16 our sincere condolences to his family, friends, and all who
17 knew and loved him; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
19 presented to the family of Dr. Gibson as an expression of our
20 deepest sympathy.