



SR0628

LRB104 20908 LAW 34633 r

1

SENATE RESOLUTION

2

WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of Lee Arthur Coleman II of East St. Louis, who passed away on September 10, 2025; and

3

4

5

WHEREAS, Lee Coleman was born to Sarah (Boochee) and Lee Coleman Sr. in East St. Louis on April 10, 1952; he belonged to the group of students known as the "East St. Louis 12", who were the first, by federal decree, to integrate Lansdowne Junior High School; he later graduated from East St. Louis Senior High School in 1970, and he earned his Bachelor of Science in Education and Social Work from the University of Illinois; and

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

WHEREAS, Lee Coleman returned to his hometown of East St. Louis, where he began his career as an outreach worker at Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House; he founded Buster Drugless, Inc., a program designed to combat drug addiction, and he became a mentor and frequent speaker for The James F. Clayborne Mentoring and Enrichment Program; he was also a business owner and educator, working as a substitute teacher in East St. Louis School District 189; and

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

WHEREAS, Lee Coleman served as equal employment officer with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) for 15

22

1 years until his retirement in 2019; during his tenure, he was  
2 widely regarded as an authority on navigating the agency; his  
3 work ensured fairness and equity in opportunities for  
4 Black-owned businesses, leading to the passage of two key  
5 bills in the Illinois General Assembly that guaranteed  
6 minority contractors access to road construction contracts  
7 through IDOT; and

8 WHEREAS, Lee Coleman held numerous roles that reflected  
9 his dedication to community and justice throughout his life,  
10 including serving as precinct committeeman, purchasing  
11 director, and city manager for East St. Louis; he helped  
12 manage Barack Obama's campaign during his run for U.S. Senate  
13 in 2003; he also served as both a board member and the southern  
14 regional vice president of the Illinois State Black Chamber of  
15 Commerce, strengthening the voice and visibility of Black  
16 businesses throughout the region; and

17 WHEREAS, Lee Coleman's deepest passion was empowering the  
18 people in his community to reach their full potential; in his  
19 personal time, he was a steady presence for children, teens,  
20 and young adults, offering financial support, connecting them  
21 with job opportunities, or simply stepping in as a surrogate  
22 father with a compassionate ear; his mentorship and care left  
23 an enduring mark on countless lives; and

1           WHEREAS, At the time of his passing, Lee Coleman was  
2 survived by his wife of 52 years, Annette Fields Coleman;  
3 their children, Lee Arthur (Josephine) Coleman III, Tamasha  
4 (Melvin) Coleman-Davis, and Sarah (Craig) Stennis; three  
5 grandchildren; his siblings, Peggy (Bobby) Wedgeworth, Carol  
6 Malone, Pearlie (Larry) Barton, Doris Marie (John) Grinston,  
7 Renate Coleman, Larry (Etta) Coleman, Bobby (Kimberly)  
8 Coleman, and Ray (Cynthia) Coleman; and a host of nieces,  
9 nephews, cousins, and friends; therefore, be it

10           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL  
11 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of  
12 Lee Arthur Coleman II and extend our sincere condolences to  
13 his family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it  
14 further

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