



SR0848

LRB104 21171 MST 35576 r

1 SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened
3 to learn of the death of James Oliver Gross, who passed away on
4 February 18, 2026; and

5 WHEREAS, James Gross was born in Memphis, Tennessee to
6 Willie Lee Stanford and James Reginald Gross on August 2,
7 1942; as a child, he was a member of Mt. Pisgah C/M.E. Church
8 in Memphis, and his family eventually moved to the Orange
9 Mound neighborhood; he graduated from Melrose High School in
10 1960 and attended Los Angeles City Colleges before returning
11 to Memphis and attending Lemoyne Junior College (now
12 Lemoyne-Owen) in the mid-60s; and

13 WHEREAS, James Gross enrolled in Tennessee State
14 University in 1965; he was a member of Kappa Alpha Psi
15 Fraternity, Alpha Theta Chapter and represented the chapter on
16 the cover of the Kappa Journal in 1966; he graduated with
17 honors from Tennessee State University with a major in
18 sociology in 1967; and

19 WHEREAS, James Gross spent 1967 to 1969 in Puerto Cabello,
20 Venezuela; he served as a physical education teacher, and his
21 greatest accomplishment was to garner funds from USAID and
22 non-profits in the United States to complete the completion of

1 a school in another part of Puerto Cabello; he completed a
2 40-year dream of visiting Puerto Cabello in 2007 and seeing
3 the school where he taught physical education and the school
4 that he built; and

5 WHEREAS, James Gross continued his love for learning by
6 obtaining two more degrees, a Master of Arts in Personnel and
7 Guidance Administration in 1971 and a Juris Doctorate from
8 Depaul Law School in 1978; and

9 WHEREAS, James Gross married Karen Laurette Bozeman in
10 1982, and they traveled the world together; and

11 WHEREAS, James Gross had a vast and distinguished social
12 service career; he served as executive director of the
13 Clarence Darrow Community Service Center in Le Claire Courts
14 near Midway Airport from 1971 to 1976, and upon his departure,
15 he left standing a day care center that he built that served
16 the community for many years after; he worked at the
17 Thresholds Psychiatric Rehabilitation Agency; he also served
18 as executive director of Firman House Community Center from
19 1985 to 1987 and program/project director at the Henry Boothe
20 House, the Altgeld Gardens Community Center, and the Ford
21 Heights Community Service Center; he served as employment
22 assistance director for Chicago Public Schools before his last
23 professional job at Chicago Housing Authority, from which he

1 retired in 2015; and

2 WHEREAS, James Gross consulted with many social service
3 agencies and educational institutions, including the Institute
4 of Positive Education, the Community Renewal Society, Bethel
5 New Life, the National College of Black Law, and numerous
6 other small churches and organizations; and

7 WHEREAS, James Gross was the impetus for three major laws,
8 the Nuisance Law in the City of Chicago, the Domestic Violence
9 Law in the City of Chicago, and the Expungement Law for the
10 State of Illinois; and

11 WHEREAS, James Gross was fondly known as "Professor Gross"
12 at Kennedy-King College, as "Rabbit" by some, and as "Baba
13 James" by others; and

14 WHEREAS, James Gross was preceded in death by his parents;
15 his brothers, Alfred and Stanford Gross; and his daughter,
16 Kamaria Laurette Gross; and

17 WHEREAS, James Gross is survived by his wife, Karen
18 Laurette Bozeman Gross; his daughter, Robyn (Deryle) Wheatley
19 McCoy; his son, Jabari Wilfred Oliver Gross; his sister,
20 Willie Levada Gross Moore; his grandchildren, Kaiden Collins,
21 Kairo Gross, Jamir Gross, Sebastian McCoy, Ethan McCoy, Riley

1 McCoy, and Rayna McCoy; and numerous nieces and nephews and
2 great-nieces and nephews; therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL
4 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
5 James Oliver Gross and extend our sincere condolences to his
6 family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it
7 further

8 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
9 presented to the family of James Gross as a symbol of our
10 deepest sympathy.