



HR1476

LRB099 23985 MST 51563 r

1

HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of James K.
4 Polk of Peoria, who passed away on November 8, 2016; and

5 WHEREAS, James Polk was born in Memphis, Tennessee to
6 Charlie and Nellie (Jones) Polk on June 13, 1939; he moved to
7 Peoria in 1943 and graduated from Peoria High School in 1957,
8 where he was an All-State basketball player; he attended
9 community college and married Virginia Kyle, Patricia Stokes,
10 and Patti; and

11 WHEREAS, James Polk worked for General Motors in California
12 from 1961 to 1967; after returning to Peoria, he worked for
13 CILCO and ran the YWCA Ashanti Umojia Youth Center before
14 joining Caterpillar in 1974; he retired from Caterpillar in
15 1986 and founded several businesses, including the Balance
16 Stone Strategies Group; and

17 WHEREAS, James Polk was a member of the Peoria County Board
18 from 1972 to 1976 and from 1982 to 1985; he was a Peoria City
19 Councilman for the First District from 1985 to 1993; he was the
20 first African American to run and win those positions; he
21 served on the Illinois Central College Board of Trustees,
22 beginning in 1997 with eight years in leadership positions; he

1 served on the Board of Trustees Greater Peoria Mass
2 Transit-City Link from 2007 to just recently; he was on the
3 Tri-County Regional Planning Commission for 10 years, serving
4 as past Chairman; he was involved with Illinois Central
5 College, CityLink, the Peoria Civic Center Authority, the Boys
6 & Girls Clubs of America, the American Community College
7 Trustee Association, and the Tri-County Regional Planning
8 Commission; and

9 WHEREAS, James Polk helped Carol Moseley Braun in her
10 election to the United States Senate as the first black female
11 senator, serving as downstate Chairman for her United States
12 Senate campaign; he was twice elected to the National
13 Democratic Convention and served as a consultant to Chicago
14 Mayor Harold Washington; and

15 WHEREAS, James Polk was a recipient of the 2015 Peoria Area
16 Chamber of Commerce Tom Connor Service Award, the 2015 Peoria
17 Magazines Local Legends, and the 2006 Dr. Martin Luther King
18 Commemorative Service Leadership Award; in 2014, he was
19 inducted into the African American Hall of Fame; and

20 WHEREAS, James Polk was a member of the Mt. Zion Baptist
21 Church, the Peoria Downtown Rotary Club, and the NAACP, where
22 he served as Vice-President; and

1 WHEREAS, James Polk was preceded in death by his son, Kevin
2 Polk; and

3 WHEREAS, James Polk is survived by his wife of 17 years,
4 Patti; his children, Karen (Billy) Raymond, Jonelle (Daniel)
5 McCloud, and Rebecca Polk; his stepchildren, Anika (Henry)
6 Florez, and Joshua (Gina) Sterling; his brother, Sam (Jean)
7 Polk; seven grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren;
8 therefore, be it

9 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
10 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
11 mourn the passing of James K. Polk, and extend our sincere
12 condolences to his family, friends, and all who knew and loved
13 him; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
15 presented to the family of James Polk as an expression of our
16 deepest sympathy.