



SR1899

LRB099 21887 MST 48818 r

1

SENATE RESOLUTION

2

WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of James E. Gast of New Lenox, who passed away on May 9, 2016; and

3

4

5

WHEREAS, James Gast was born to Stanton and Clare (Brock) Gast on July 7, 1941; he attended St. Joseph Grade School and graduated from Lincoln-Way High School in 1959, where he was active on the football and baseball teams, serving as Captain of both during his Senior year; he was also a member of the Future Farmers of America, was a representative in Springfield for Boys State, and was on the Student Council; he attended St. Ambrose College and Southern Illinois University, where he majored in Agriculture; he married Mary Lou Cummins in 1965; and

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

WHEREAS, James Gast began his career as a salesman with the International Harvester Company in 1964; he worked in various management positions for the next ten years in Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, and Minnesota; his last assignment was in Warren, Minnesota, where he managed a company store from 1972 to 1974; in December of 1974, he purchased Moss Equipment in Joliet and created Gast International, an International Harvester Farm Equipment store; after five years in the original facilities, he moved into a new, larger facility; his

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

1 dealership has been featured in many International Harvester
2 advertising brochures, TV commercials, and company magazines;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, James Gast served as President of the
5 International Harvester North American Agriculture Dealer
6 Council representing U.S. and Canadian agriculture dealers in
7 1982; he served on various advisory councils at Lincoln-Way
8 High School, Joliet Junior College, and St. Francis Academy and
9 was past Chairman of the Will County Heart Fund Drive; he was
10 always active in the Farm Equipment Association, serving as
11 President in 1983; he was involved in many Illinois Retail
12 Dealer's Association activities and served as President in
13 1984; he retired in 2000; and

14 WHEREAS, James Gast's proudest accomplishment was being
15 elected to the Board of Education of Lincoln-Way Community High
16 School in 1983; he served on the Board for 33 years from 1983
17 to 2016; he was a community relations ambassador for the
18 Lincoln-Way High School District 210; he served as President of
19 the Board of Education three times from 1989 to 1991, from 1997
20 to 1998, and from 2003 to 2005; he served as the Board liaison
21 to the Lincoln-Way District 210 Foundation for Educational
22 Excellence from 1999 to 2001; and

23 WHEREAS, James Gast was a strong supporter of the

1 district's vocational and fine arts programs; his support of a
2 partnership for an Agri-Science Center in conjunction with a
3 neighboring village succeeded in securing an eight-acre
4 Agri-Science Center; he also took a leadership role with the
5 Lincoln-Way Alumni Planning Committee and served on their board
6 of directors for more than six years; and

7 WHEREAS, James Gast was one of the leaders of the
8 district's 10-year reading program, which became a graduation
9 requirement by the Board of Education; he was one of the
10 presenters of the district's reading program, "Ascending the
11 Reading Summit: 10 Step Success Story" as part of the Carousel
12 of Panels at the Illinois Association of School Board's Annual
13 Conference in 2010; and

14 WHEREAS, James Gast was involved with Lincoln-Way's
15 Special Education Joint Agreement Governing Board of District
16 843 on which he was a member from 2001 to 2015; he served as
17 Secretary from 2003 to 2006, as President from 2007 to 2009,
18 and as Vice-President from 2013 to 2015; he served over 45,000
19 Lincoln-Way students during his 33 years as a Board of
20 Education member; he dedicated thousands of hours to activities
21 to improve support and understanding of the school district;
22 and

23 WHEREAS, James Gast twice earned the INSPRA's

1 Distinguished Service Award in the Board of Education category;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, James Gast was a hard-working, self-made man who
4 was dedicated to his family, his business, and his community;
5 he had a strong, quiet exterior and a devoted and generous
6 heart; he and his wife, Mary Lou, always had an open door to
7 welcome friends and enjoyed hosting parties for friends, family
8 and "the kids"; and

9 WHEREAS, James Gast was father to Mark E. (Christy) Gast
10 and Melissa (Alan) Breitbart; brother to Kathleen (Dennis)
11 Galle, Ray (Jo) Gast, and Rita (Charlie) Russella;
12 brother-in-law to Vance Cummins; "Papa" to his grandchildren,
13 Ryan and Alec Gast and James and Mia Breitbart; and "Uncle Jim"
14 to his nieces and nephews, Juli, Galle, Mike (Erin) Galle, Beth
15 (Kameron) deVente, Jeff (Katrina) Galle, Christopher (Melanie)
16 Galle, Andrea (Kieran) Noonan, Nick (Meg) Galle, Kate (Sean)
17 Ramswick, Pete Russella, and Joe Russella, Melissa (Hugh) Rink,
18 David Morgan, and Kristen Gast; therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL
20 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
21 James E. Gast, and extend our sincere condolences to his
22 family, friends, and all who knew and loved him; and be it
23 further

1 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
2 presented to the family of James Gast as an expression of our
3 deepest sympathy.