



SR0782

LRB104 21751 LAW 37415 r

SENATE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of Opal Delores Rice, who passed away on April 20, 2026; and

WHEREAS, Opal Rice was born to Charles E. James Sr. and Flora B. Turner in St. Louis, Missouri on June 28, 1949; she attended Sawyer College of Business in Waukegan, Illinois in 1968; she married Thomas R. May in August 1969, with whom she had three daughters and remained friends throughout her life; she later married Alphonso Rice in July 1981, and they shared 44 years of marriage together; and

WHEREAS, Opal Rice worked as a proof operator and bank teller at First Midwest Bank, and she later served the City of Waukegan Police Department from 1978 to 1988, where she worked as a communications I dispatcher, a clerical tech II, and a victim services advocate; she later began a career with Commonwealth Edison, retiring as a senior customer service representative in 2003 so she could devote more time to helping raise her grandchildren; she started her successful career as an independent representative for Avon in 2000, and she continued it with passion and commitment throughout her life, earning recognition in the Avon President's Club on multiple occasions; and

1 WHEREAS, Opal Rice proudly served as a trustee of the
2 Waukegan Township Board from 2017 to 2021; she also served as a
3 secretary and a treasurer for reelection campaigns, was a
4 member of the Senior Citizens Service Committee (SCSC), became
5 a founding member of the Distinguished Visionaries Committee,
6 and was a valued member for the Thousand Dollar Club for the
7 annual Artis Yancey HBCU tours; and

8 WHEREAS, Opal Rice committed to her faith at an early age
9 and was baptized at Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church in
10 Waukegan in April 1960; she then joined Gideon Missionary
11 Baptist Church in Waukegan in April 1962, where she faithfully
12 served for more than 35 years in many roles, including as a
13 clerk, a choir member, a Sunday School teacher, an usher, and
14 as president of the Gideon Usher Ministry; she was also a
15 member of the Finance Committee and Security Team, and she
16 served as vice-chairman and secretary of the Gideon Federal
17 Credit Union; and

18 WHEREAS, Opal Rice was also deeply committed to usher
19 ministry beyond her local church; for more than 35 years, she
20 was an active member of the Twin City Usher League, where she
21 most recently served as vice president and board chairman of
22 the Unit Church Ushers League of Illinois, Inc.; she also
23 served as chairman of the Twin City Recreational Picnic

1 Project and was a member of the Central Region Ushers under the
2 umbrella of the National United Church Ushers Association; and

3 WHEREAS, Opal Rice deeply cherished her family, and she
4 treasured spending time with her children, grandchildren, and
5 great-grandchildren; she enjoyed worshipping and serving in
6 church, traveling around the world, attending family reunions,
7 exercising, sharing her love for beauty and connection through
8 Avon, and watching her favorite shows, Chicago P.D., Chicago
9 Fire, Wheel of Fortune, and Law & Order: Special Victims Unit;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Opal Rice was preceded in death by her father;
12 her stepfather, James E. Turner; her daughter, Audra Monique
13 May; her grandmother, Queen Elizabeth James; her grandparents,
14 William and Azalea Campbell; her brothers, Andre James and
15 Charles E. James Jr.; and her sisters, Sheela Paine and Avia
16 James; and

17 WHEREAS, Opal Rice is survived by her husband; her mother;
18 her mother-in-law, Girlena Rice; her daughters, Tanya Michele
19 (May) Phillips and Dionne Monique May; her sisters, Yolanda
20 Johnson, Trena (Maurice) McGuire, and Dimeta Bruce; her
21 brothers, Gregory Turner, Rosario (Deshanea) James, Rodriguez
22 James, and Nolan James; her brother-in-law, Alfred (Jodi)
23 Rice; four grandsons and three granddaughters; one

1 great-granddaughter and four great-grandsons; her goddaughter,
2 Regina Danzie; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins,
3 extended family members, church family, and friends;
4 therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL
6 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
7 Opal Delores Rice and extend our sincere condolences to her
8 family, friends, and all who knew and loved her; and be it
9 further

10 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
11 presented to the family of Opal Rice as an expression of our
12 deepest sympathy.