



**Senator Donzella James**  
*Senate District 35*

**Senator Donzella James** is a democratic senator representing Metropolitan Atlanta's 35th District of Georgia, which includes portions of Fulton and Douglas Counties. She proudly served four and one half full terms and retired to offer herself to serve in the US Congress. In 2009, Senator James was re-elected to serve once again in the State Senate.

Senator James currently serves as the Chairwoman of Interstate Cooperation. She is also a member of the Education and Youth, Special Judiciary, and Economic Development, and committees. She has worked to bring progressive change in the area of crime reduction, a safe and clean environment, stronger drunk driving laws and drug trafficking laws, economic development, increased access to affordable healthcare and quality education.

Senator James is a distinguished and experienced lawmaker, having sponsored or co-sponsored more than 400 pieces of legislation throughout her tenure in the Georgia Senate. She was proud to support Senate Bill 1 during the 2015 Legislative session which requires insurance companies provide coverage for autistic children ages 6 and under, up to \$30,000 per year. Senator James championed House Bill 89, a piece of legislation that gives local ordinance continued flexibility to incorporate drug-free commercial zones, undoubtedly making our communities safer place for Georgia families.

Senator James has been an ardent supporter of education, fighting to increase funding and minimize cuts to the budget during the most recent economic recession. She has also championed veterans issues, dedicating a Douglas County bridge in PFC Melvin Johnson's honor, the first African American soldier to lose his life in the Vietnam War from Douglas County.

A state senator with passion for issues effecting those in need around the world, Senator James has lead the charge to strengthen Georgia's relationship with the continent of Africa. With the passage of Senate Resolution 9 during the 2013 Legislative Session, she was instrumental in urging the Georgia Department of Economic Development to promote and strengthen beneficial ties with African nations. She has traveled extensively to gain a better understanding of the humanitarian issues facing nations around the world, specifically those in Nigeria, Congo, Turkey, Costa Rica, and South Korea.

Senator James earned a Bachelor degree in criminal justice and political science from Morris Brown College in Atlanta, Georgia, an honorary Doctorate of Humanities from Macon's Emmanuel Bible College, an honorary doctorate degree from the Bride of Christ Bible College and Seminary in Nigeria and studied additionally at Georgia State University. Senator James has a proven record as a successful policy-maker and known to be committed to the people, a fiscally responsible professional, and a strong woman of faith. She



has been a major force for progressive change, and her commitment to family values and the salvation of Georgia's children has been exemplary.

Senator James has been the recipient of numerous awards throughout her time in the Georgia Senate including the 2014 Friends of Nigeria Award, the 2014 Georgia Association of Black Elected Officials Freedom Fighter Award, the 2013 Rising in Community Excellence Award and the 2013 Mother's Against Drunk Driving Legislator of the Year, among others.

As a leader in her community, Senator James is a member of the Executive Advisory Board for Tapestry Ministries, Keep South Fulton Beautiful, African Women Leadership Organization, International Women's Thing Tank, and the Sonje Yo Human Rights Organization. She is also a member of the National Organization of the Black Elected Leaders, Georgia Association of Black Elected Officials, Georgia Legislative Black Caucus, Georgia Women's Caucus, Georgia Working Families Caucus, Douglas County Delegation and the Fulton County Delegation.

Senator James is a retired federal employee with dedicated service as a member of the National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees. Senator James, a native of Atlanta, also taught in Atlanta public schools for more than a decade.

The Senator and the late Mr. Elmo James were married for more than 35 years. They are parents of two sons, Brian James and the late Kerry James; daughter-in-law Cheryl Renee; and three grandchildren, Kerri, Ryan and Bryce.

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