

SENATOR DONZELLA JAMES

GEORGIA'S 28TH SENATE DISTRICT

Senator Donzella James, a Democrat, was originally elected to the Georgia State Senate in 1995. After offering to run for Congress, Sen. James returned to the State Senate to represent Senate District 28 in 2009. Beginning in 2025, Sen. James will begin representing Senate District 28 which includes portions of Cobb, Douglas and south Fulton counties.

Sen. James currently serves as the Chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Urban Affairs and as Vice Chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Interstate Cooperation committee.

She is also a member of the Senate Committees on Appropriations, Economic Development and Tourism committees and Education and Youth. She has worked in the areas of crime reduction, the environment, promoting stronger drunk driving laws and sex trafficking laws, economic development, increased access to affordable healthcare, affordable housing and quality education.

Sen. James has sponsored or co-sponsored hundreds of 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 to provide coverage for autistic children ages 6 and under, up to \$30,000 per year. Sen. James also championed House Bill 89, a piece of legislation that gives local ordinance continued flexibility to incorporate drug-free commercial zones, making our communities safer places for Georgia families.

Sen. James has been an ardent supporter of education, fighting to increase funding. She has also championed veterans issues, dedicating a Douglas County bridge in Private First Class Melvin Johnson's honor, the first African American soldier to lose his life in the Vietnam War from Douglas County.

Sen. 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 reinforce 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, Liberia, Ghana, Congo, Turkey, Costa Rica, and South Korea.

Sen. James continues to lead the charge to address housing disparities in Georgia. Throughout numerous legislative sessions, she has fought to repeal the prohibition against cities and counties enacting rent control laws as a way to keep housing affordable. She was successful in passing SR 37, creating the Senate Property Owners' Associations, Homeowner's Associations, and Condominium Associations Study Committee to undertake a study of the conditions, needs, issues and problems and recommend any action or legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate.



Sen. James earned her Bachelor's 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. Sen. James is known as a strong woman of faith.

Having been mentored by Shirley Chisolm, the Founder of the National Women's Political Caucus (NPWC), Sen. James has always been an advocate for women in politics and women's rights. The NPWC was formed in 1971 to identify, recruit, train, endorse and support women seeking public office including Congresswoman Maxine Waters.

Sen. 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, the 2013 Mother's Against Drunk Driving Legislator of the Year and the 2023 Leroy Johnson Legislator of the Year Award, among others.

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

Sen. James is a retired federal employee with dedicated service as a member of the National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees. Sen. 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; three grandchildren, Kerri, Ryan and Bryce; and two great-grandchildren: Malik and Isis. She recently married her current husband, Mr. Benny Robinson, in June 2022.

