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MAYOR PRESENTS GARY LEGEND AWARD POSTHUMOUSLY TO LAKE COUNTY COUNCILWOMAN ELISE FRANKLIN

Gary, Indiana-During a presentation at the recent meeting of the Gary Common Council, Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson said Lake County Councilwoman Elsie Franklin was a Gary Legend who made a significant impact on the city she truly loved; Gary, Indiana.

Freeman-Wilson presented the city's Gary Legend award to Elsie "Ray" Franklin posthumously. Franklin's daughter, Cheryl accepted the award. Elsie Franklin was the first African-American woman to serve on the Lake County Council. She served on the council for 17 years as the 2nd District County Councilwomen and last year was elected to another 4-year term on the council. Some affectionately called her the queen; the godmother in Democratic politics.

Elsie "Ray" Franklin was a true public servant dedicated to serving the community and the people of Gary. She served honorably and consistently in the public arena working to make a difference in Gary and Lake County, Indiana.

Franklin held several government positions and served on various boards throughout Northwest Indiana. In addition to her role in county government she was major in Democratic politics-both in city and county politics serving as Chairwoman of the Gary Precinct Organization, Vice Chairwoman of the Lake County Democratic Party and Captain of the Third District Precinct Organization. She also served as director of General Services under Mayor Thomas Barnes.

"I was honored to know her and work with her," said Mayor Freeman-Wilson. Her absence leaves a void in the political fabric of our community. I will always cherish our friendship and our last conversations as she still worked to encourage this community with everything she had."

On Monday, May 6, 2019, Franklin was called home to be with the Lord after a lengthy illness. Her legacy continues through her beautiful children: Cherylynn, Michael, Kimberly, Kenya, Keesha, Theodore and Dara.

Through her accomplishments Franklin created a legacy that will live on in our community and will never be forgotten. The mayor concluded, "It is my great pleasure to present this Gary Legend award (posthumously) to Elsie "Ray" Franklin." The mayor made the presentation at the June 18th meeting.

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