

1 State of Arkansas
2 95th General Assembly
3 Fiscal Session, 2026

SMR 5

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5 By: Senators M. Johnson, C. Tucker, F. Love

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8 **SENATE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION**

9 TO REMEMBER ATTORNEY JOHN GILL FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS
10 TO THE CITY OF LITTLE ROCK, TO THE STATE OF ARKANSAS,
11 AND TO THE PRACTICE OF LAW IN ARKANSAS.

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14 **Subtitle**

15 TO REMEMBER ATTORNEY JOHN GILL FOR HIS
16 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CITY OF LITTLE
17 ROCK, TO THE STATE OF ARKANSAS, AND TO
18 THE PRACTICE OF LAW IN ARKANSAS.

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20 WHEREAS, John Purifoy Gill, of Little Rock, Arkansas, passed away on
21 Saturday, March 7, 2026; and

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23 WHEREAS, John Gill was born on December 9, 1936, in Fort Smith,
24 Arkansas, to Georgia Belle Burnett Gill and Keener Purifoy Gill; and

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26 WHEREAS, John Gill initially attended Hendrix College for undergraduate
27 studies before transferring to Vanderbilt University, where he was a member
28 of the Naval ROTC and where he earned both his undergraduate and law degrees;
29 and

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31 WHEREAS, John Gill met the love of his life, Marjem Gill, while
32 attending Hendrix College, and John Gill and Marjem Gill were married on June
33 30, 1960; and

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35 WHEREAS, following his graduation from Vanderbilt University Law
36 School, John Gill moved to Marine Corps Base Quantico, where he served first



1 as an infantry officer in the United States Marine Corps, and later as a
2 member of the Naval Judge Advocate General's Corps, retiring as a Lieutenant
3 Colonel; and

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5 WHEREAS, John Gill joined the Arkansas Bar in 1962 and built a
6 distinguished legal career in Little Rock; and

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8 WHEREAS, the legal accomplishments of John Gill include serving as a
9 delegate to the 1969 Arkansas Constitutional Convention, as special counsel
10 to the Governor for the proposed Arkansas Constitution Revision of 1996, on
11 the faculty of the Arkansas College of Trial Advocacy, as a founding member
12 of the Arkansas Supreme Court Committee on Rules of Civil Procedure, and as a
13 member of the Arkansas Water Code Study Commission from 1981 to 1982; and

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15 WHEREAS, John Gill served as President of the Arkansas Bar Association,
16 as a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, and was instrumental in
17 adding the Attorney Oath of Office to the Arkansas Attorney's License; and

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19 WHEREAS, John Gill was founder of Gill Ragon Owen, P.A., one of the
20 largest law firms in Arkansas; and

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22 WHEREAS, John Gill was appointed by Governor Mike Beebe to serve on the
23 State Parks, Recreation, and Travel Commission in 2011, where he proudly
24 served for twelve (12) years; and

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26 WHEREAS, John Gill was an avid supporter of Preserve Arkansas, and was
27 awarded the Parker Westbrook Award for Lifetime Achievement in 2019; and

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29 WHEREAS, John Gill had a lasting and significant impact on landmarks
30 across Arkansas, including through strategic planning, fund raising, and
31 renovations to the Little Rock Visitor Information Center at Historic Curran
32 Hall and the Firehouse Hostel in MacArthur Park, and through the
33 installations of the La Petite Roche plaque and historical marker at the
34 Little Rock River Market, the glass sculpture "Straight Lines on a Round
35 World" at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock, and the portrait
36 of leading civil rights attorney Scipio Africanus Jones at the Scipio A.

1 Jones Post Office in Little Rock; and

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3 WHEREAS, John Gill was an accomplished author, penning and publishing
4 seven (7) books, including (4) books concerning his beloved Arkansas: "On the
5 Courthouse Square in Arkansas", "Post Masters: Arkansas Post Office Art in
6 the New Deal", "Open House: The Arkansas Governor's Mansion and Its Place in
7 History", and "The Crossroads of Arkansas"; and

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9 WHEREAS, John Gill brought together his intellectual and spiritual
10 interests through a variety of activities, including his research and
11 lectures on "The Trial of Jesus", founding the John and Marjem Gill Preaching
12 Workshop, and endowing the John and Marjem Gill Lecture; and

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14 WHEREAS, John Gill was an active member of First United Methodist
15 Church in Little Rock, where he served as a trustee, organized the Bowen
16 Sunday School Class, and held the roles of vice chairman and chairman of the
17 Administrative Board; and

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19 WHEREAS, John Gill is survived by his wife of nearly sixty-six (66)
20 years, Marjem Gill, by his brother, George Gill, by his children, Elizabeth
21 Gill Myers, Ward Gill, and David Gill, and by his seven (7) grandchildren and
22 six (6) great grandchildren,

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24 NOW THEREFORE,

25 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
26 STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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28 THAT the Senate remember John Purifoy Gill and recognize his many
29 contributions to Little Rock, to the State of Arkansas, and to the practice
30 of law in the State of Arkansas.

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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT upon adoption of this resolution, an appropriate
33 copy be provided to Marjem Gill and family by the Secretary of the Senate.

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