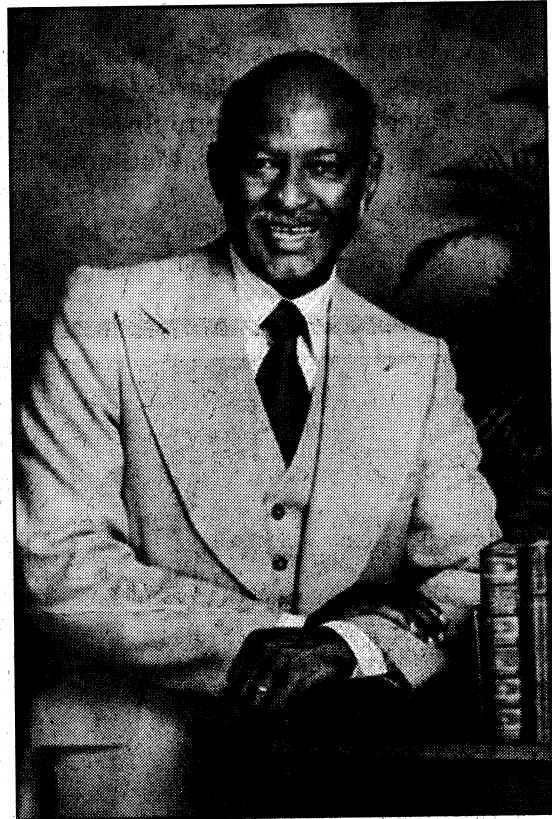


# Civil Rights Activist With Houston County Roots Loses Battle With Cancer

By PennyLynn Webb

Carter Gilmore, 80, the first African American elected to the Oakland California City Council and a lifetime community and civil rights activist, past away Saturday, December 23 in his Oakland, CA home after a long battle with cancer. Gilmore was born in Grapeland May 30, 1926 to Payne Gilmore, a share cropper, and Bertha Owens Gilmore. Gilmore attended high school in Crockett, Texas and then during World War II served in the U.S. Navy. He married Elizabeth "Liz" Hampton of Crockett in 1947. In 1951 he and his wife moved to Oakland, CA, and he went to work for Granny Goose Foods, working his way from custodian to eventually be a plant manager and remained there until his retirement in 1993. He was a member of Bethel Baptist Church in Oakland, CA from the 1950s until his death.

Gilmore was elected as the first African American Oakland California City Council Member in 1977. His greatest achievements on the council include creating a city anti-blight ordinance and leading the fight to establish the Citizens Police Review Board along with the Housing Residential Rent and Relocation Board. He was defeated for re-election in 1990. Gilmore was very active in the NAACP. He served as president of Alameda branch. He was chairman of the Oakland NAACP's labor and industry committee in the 1990s, and led the investigation of racial discrimination against African American employees at the United Parcel Service, which resulted in a \$12.1 million dollar settlement in 1999. Gilmore also gave years of service as one of the Board of Directors for the Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Center. The center's mission was to keep children away from violence. Gilmore was also well known backer of community sports leagues. Greenman Field in Oakland was renamed Carter Gilmore Sports Complex on December 9, 2006. At the renaming ceremony Gilmore was quoted to say "As I was



Carter Gilmore

traveling this way, I wasn't trying to do anything special. I was just trying to help make my community a better place;" going on to say, "Each one of us should look into the community and ask, 'What can I do to help make this a better place than I found it when I came?'"

Gilmore is survived by his wife of 59 years, Elizabeth "Liz" Hampton Gilmore; his children, Carl, Clifford, Donald, Carol, Rodney and Janet all residents of the East Bay; his sisters, Olive Black, Claudine Ary, Maude Khan and Erma Ingrams, all of Oakland, and Hattie Collins of Texas; his brothers, Paul of Oakland and Clarence of Nevada; 13 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.