

## Gay, Robert D. Orr

**Gov. Robert D. Orr**  
Driven by a steadfast dedication to make Indiana a better place for future generations, Robert D. Orr served his hometown, his state, and his nation with distinction as state senator, lt. governor, governor, and U.S. ambassador. Orr's service to Indiana spanned four decades and touched nearly every facet of Hoosier life.

Orr died at Indiana University Hospital in Indianapolis on March 10, 2004, at the age of 86.

Governor Orr will lie in state in the rotunda of the state capitol on Tuesday, March 16, beginning at dawn. The service will start at 11:00 a.m. with burial immediately following at Crown Hill Cemetery. All services are open to the public. A memorial service is being planned for a future date in his hometown of Evansville, Ind.

As Indiana's 45th governor, he presided over the strengthening of Indiana's economy after the recession of the early 1980's that resulted in the strongest recovery in the 40 years.

Orri made education and economic development the cornerstones of his administration, and they were to become his greatest achievements. His landmark education reform program, "A+", expanded Project Primetime to reduce class sizes in the early grades, increased the school year, broadened student testing and remediation, and required greater accountability for schools. It was applauded nationwide as one of the most sweeping education reform initiatives

The comprehensive package of economic development initiatives implemented by Orr and his Lt. Governor John Mutz became a national model and helped create a record number of Hoosier jobs during the 1980's. As governor, Orr led six trade delegations to Europe and the Pacific Rim, promoting Indiana as the place to locate or expand a business and touting Indiana products as the best in the world. In 1986, Orr persuaded Fuji Heavy Industries and Isuzu Motors Ltd. to locate their automotive plant near Lafayette.

Orr took bold steps to reform the state's license branches, raised the standard of care at all state mental health facilities, championed long-range, stable funding for the state's highway system that included a greater return of federal highway dollars to Indiana, and initiated the first-ever AIDS education and awareness initiative stemming from the nationwide attention to the case of *Hossein Ross White*.

His work in international trade led to his appointment by President George H.W. Bush as U.S. Ambassador to Singapore where he served for three years.

Orr was born on November 17, 1917, in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and grew up in Evansville, Indiana. A 1940 graduate of Yale University, Orr attended Harvard College School of Business before the outbreak of World War II. He served in the U.S. Army in the Pacific theater of operations, rising from private to major. He received the Legion of Merit for his outstanding service.

The sixth generation Hoosier returned to his native Evansville following the war and entered the family business, the Orr Iron Company. He was a business, civic, and political leader before being elected to the state senate in 1968. In 1972, Orr was elected lieutenant governor and served two terms. In 1980, he was elected governor by a record margin. He was reelected in 1984. A businessman and industrialist most of his life, Orr was a former chairman of Indian Industries Inc., of Evansville, manufac-

He holds honorary doctoral degrees from Indiana University, University of Evansville, University of Southern Indiana, Hanover College, Butler University, Indiana State University, and Vincennes University.

He was president of the Council of State Governments, a member of the steering committee of the Education Commission of the States, and was the only governor appointed to serve on U.S. Department of Education Secretary William Bennett's Study Group on Elementary Education.

Orr also served as chairman of the National Governors Association Transportation and Commerce Committee. By appointment of President Ronald Reagan, he was a member of the Amtrak board of directors, representing governors.

er is survived by his wife, the former Mary E. Davis, son Robert Dunkerson Orr, Jr. (and wife Carol), of New Haven, CT; two daughters Robbina Orr Hall (and husband Jim) of Ocala, FL; and a son and husband Mike) of Ocala, MO; stepdaughter Christy Stossinger of Indianapolis; Sister Kendrick Kim' Orr Trust of Milwaukee, WI; and a grandchild, Jane Hogue Orr of Evansville; grandsons Leone Eugene Hall (and wife Sara) of Quincy, MO; Laine William Hall (and wife) of Quincy, MO; Philip Jones (and wife Debra) of Houston, TX; Christopher Ethan Jones (and wife Diana), San Diego, CA; William Douglas Orr (and wife) of Quincy, MO; and a grandnephew, Larry Orr of New Haven, CT. Ambrose Robbina Orr of New Haven, CT, granddaughter Margaret Porter Orr of New Haven, CT, three nephews and one niece.