



## **Forty Years Of Dedication To Civil Rights Make Senator Orrock A Leading Legislator**

**By Amanda Smith**

*“We don’t see Nan as white; we see her as a sister who happens to have light skin. I define race by your philosophy”*

*Tyrone Brooks  
State Representative & President of GABEO*

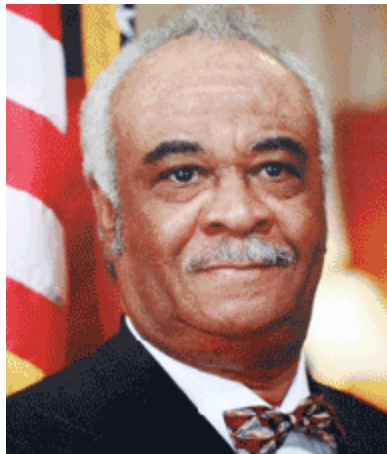
The daughter of a Georgia father and a Tennessee mother, Senator Nan Orrock has lived in Atlanta for 40 years. She represents District 36 of Georgia, but this description could never describe to you a woman who has spent her life in service for others. A House Representative for 20 years, Orrock won her Senate seat in 2006. During her service in the House, she was elected as the first woman to hold the position of majority whip. She also served as the Governor’s Floor Leader and a member of the Speakers Policy Committee. Currently, Orrock is vice-chair of the Interstate Cooperation Committee and serves on the Higher Education, Urban Affairs, Health and Human Services, Science and Technology, and Agriculture and Consumer Affairs committees.

But even these achievements fall short of describing Nan Orrock.

A dedicated civil rights activist, Orrock participated in the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, an event that seems to have shaped her policies and beliefs for years to come. “I was a college student and

worked in Washington, DC,” said Orrock. “Co-workers encouraged me to join them in this march and it was my first taste. I had an epiphany that day and came to understand the plight of others.” A long-standing and active member of GABEO (Georgia Association of Black Elected Officials), she serves as Director for the reenactment of the Moore’s Ford Bridge lynching that occurred on July 25, 1946 in Monroe County, Georgia. On that date, two African American couples (Dorothy Malcom was 7 months pregnant) were murdered in the last public lynching to take place in the United States.

But this is just the tip of the iceberg. Orrock has always been willing to go the distance for what is right. “We went to jail together in 1972,” said Tyrone Brooks, state Representative and President of GABEO. “She and another white woman were marching in a demonstration from Clark Atlanta University / Morehouse to the Mead Packaging Company,” Brooks described. “A couple of Atlanta police officers started beating them up and Hosea (Williams) and I ran to assist them. We all went to jail together.”



Tyrone Brooks, State Representative & President of GABEO

Why are these things unusual? Senator Orrock is rare in that she is a white female being reelected over and over in a majority black district. “Nan has always represented a majority black district,” said Brooks. “We don’t see her as white; we see her as a sister who happens to have light skin.” Said Orrock, “People are good at reading others. When given a choice, they will vote for someone authentic that makes a connection with them. People know that I sincerely believe in what I do and they deserve

representation,” she finished.



State Senator Robert Brown

“I’ve known Nan for over 25 years,” said Senator Robert Brown from Macon. “She has been an excellent member of the legislature, a great team player, a supporter of Democratic measures, and an excellent member of my team.”

Orrock is also the president of the Women Legislators’ Lobby (WILL), a national network of women who tackle and advocate for federal policies to improve underfunded services for families, children, the elderly, and the disabled. WILL is a program of WAND (Women’s Actions for New Direction), a national women’s group on whose staff she has served since 1997.

Orrock is a board member for the Sapelo Foundation, the Center for Policy Alternatives, and the Institute of Energy and Environmental Research. An advisory council member of SCLC / W.O.M.E.N., Orrock has spent her life in service to those less fortunate.