

## Former Fresno Council member Les Kimber has died

By Tomas  
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Les Kimber was one of the main speakers during the March Program of the 28th annual Fresno Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration 2012.

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Former Fresno City Council member Lesly H. “Les” Kimber, who co-founded the California Advocate Newspaper and was a strong activist for racial equality, died Saturday.

Gail Gaston, who served with Kimber on the MLK Unity Committee, said Mr. Kimber was in intensive care Saturday morning at a local hospital before he died. He was 80.

“He was a pillar in the community, respected by all races and cultures,” she said. “He was looked up to by so many people. He was a great leader in Fresno.

“This is a very sad time, and my deepest sympathy to his family.”

Mr. Kimber, a native of Boonville, North Carolina, moved to Fresno in 1966 with his wife, Pauline, a Fresno native. He co-founded the Advocate in 1967, and as its publisher over the years he addressed issues such as community police relations and minority representation.

Mr. Kimber sought election several times to the Fresno City Council and Fresno County Board of Supervisors before winning election to the council in 1983. He was re-elected in 1987.

Several years before Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday became a national holiday, Kimber helped shepherd through legislation to recognize ML King Day in Fresno and created the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Unity Committee.

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