

1 A RESOLUTION adjourning the House of Representatives in honor and loving
2 memory of Joan Callahan.

3 WHEREAS, Joan Callahan, beloved wife, sister, educator, and tireless advocate for
4 the LGBT community, departed this earthly life on June 6, 2019, and this august body
5 pauses on this day in solemn appreciation of the extraordinary life of this civil rights
6 champion; and

7 WHEREAS, Joan Callahan was Professor Emeritus at the University of Kentucky,
8 where she had been a member of the faculty since 1986; and

9 WHEREAS, Joan Callahan was the Director of the Gender and Women's Studies
10 Department for nine years, and during that time her passionate dedication to her students
11 and to the causes of equality and women's rights helped earn her a reputation around this
12 Commonwealth as a woman of unbreakable courage and resolve; and

13 WHEREAS, Joan Callahan was the proud recipient of the President's Award for
14 Diversity, was an inductee into the College of Arts and Sciences' Hall of Fame, and had
15 been recognized by the American Philosophical Association as a Distinguished Feminist
16 Scholar; and

17 WHEREAS, Joan Callahan and her wife, Jennifer, hosted 17 Lexington Pride
18 picnics at their farm before the event evolved into a two-day downtown festival. The
19 couple worked tirelessly to gather support for the Lexington fairness ordinance, which
20 passed in 1999; and

21 WHEREAS, Joan Callahan urged, successfully, the University of Kentucky to adopt
22 domestic partner benefits. In 2013, she and Jennifer were married in Massachusetts, and
23 in 2014, after a federal judge in Louisville ruled that Kentucky had to recognize out-of-
24 state same-sex marriages, she was present when the Fayette Circuit Court overturned a
25 2008 state law limiting step-parent adoptions to heterosexual partners. Both Joan and
26 Jennifer were instrumental figures in the ongoing struggle for equality; and

27 WHEREAS, Joan Callahan was preceded in death by her parents, Joseph Thomas

1 Callahan and Mary Smith Callahan; and sisters, Terry Kitchen and Beth Lamond. She is
2 survived by her cherished wife, Jennifer Crossen; sister, Eileen Callahan Mercer; son and
3 daughter-in-law, David and Ashley Crossen; grandchildren, Sawyer and Maddox;
4 brother-in-law, Jim Mercer; and longtime friend, Ronnie Sheehy;

5 NOW, THEREFORE,

6 *Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the*
7 *Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

8 ➔Section 1. The members of the House of Representatives hereby express their
9 most profound sympathy upon the passing of Joan Callahan, and posthumously
10 acknowledge both her contributions to the University of Kentucky and to the struggle for
11 women's and LGBT rights in this Commonwealth.

12 ➔Section 2. When the House of Representatives adjourns this day, it does so in
13 honor and loving memory of Joan Callahan.

14 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the House of Representatives is directed to transmit a
15 copy of this Resolution to Representative Ruth Ann Palumbo for delivery.