

1 A RESOLUTION commemorating and honoring the life and accomplishments of
2 Dr. J. W. Patterson.

3 WHEREAS, Dr. J. W. Patterson was a native of Oklahoma who taught at
4 Muskogee Central High School before earning graduate degrees from the University of
5 Michigan and the University of Oklahoma; and

6 WHEREAS, Dr. J. W. Patterson joined the University of Kentucky's Department of
7 Communication in 1960; and

8 WHEREAS, Dr. J. W. Patterson served as University of Kentucky's debate team
9 director from 1971 until his retirement in 2009. During his tenure, he led the university
10 debate team to numerous achievements, becoming one of the most dominant teams in the
11 country; and

12 WHEREAS, while serving as director, Dr. J. W. Patterson founded several debate
13 tournaments and organizations, including the Tournament of Champions, the Kentucky
14 High School Debate Institute, and the Henry Clay College Debate Tournament. The
15 Tournament of Champions is a national high school speech and debate tournament that
16 occurs in Lexington, Kentucky, each April, and it has served to open the world of debate
17 to children across the country; and

18 WHEREAS, under Dr. J. W. Patterson's tutelage, the University of Kentucky
19 debate team sent 21 first-round teams to the National Debate Tournament and had six top
20 speakers at the tournament, the second-highest number of all time. The team won the
21 national championship in 1986, was runner-up in 2002, and won a Copeland Award,
22 given to the top-ranked team in the nation, in 1994; and

23 WHEREAS, for six decades, Dr. J. W. Patterson dedicated himself to teaching high
24 school and college students across the country. Dr. Patterson believed in the value of
25 debate, stating that "the mastery of debating both sides of any important topic creates an
26 understanding that truths always exist on all sides of every major issue"; and

27 WHEREAS, Dr. J. W. Patterson served as a special assistant to University of

1 Kentucky president John Oswald and directed the University of Kentucky's 100th
2 birthday celebration, which included more than 100 events throughout the year and a
3 Founder's Day visit from President Lyndon B. Johnson; and

4 WHEREAS, Dr. J. W. Patterson passed away peacefully in December 2023 after a
5 life of innumerable achievements; and

6 WHEREAS, David Arnett, director of UK Debate, said, "It is fair to say that no one
7 has ever had a bigger footprint on the world of speech and debate. Dr. Patterson's legacy
8 spans generations and has touched the lives of thousands. He was an elite debate coach, a
9 passionate educator, and the brilliant architect of what would become the modern
10 competitive debate ecosystem in this country. What I will remember him for most
11 though, is his love of friends and community";

12 NOW, THEREFORE,

13 *Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of*
14 *Kentucky:*

15 ➔Section 1. The members of the Senate hereby express their most profound
16 sympathy upon the passing of Dr. J. W. Patterson and honor him for his many
17 accomplishments.

18 ➔Section 2. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this
19 Resolution to Senator Reginald Thomas for delivery to the family.