

HOUSE BILL 2715

By Brown

AN ACT to name a segment of Broad Street in the City of Chattanooga in honor of beloved broadcaster, Luther Masingill.

WHEREAS, from time to time, the members of this General Assembly have seen fit to name certain highways and bridges to honor those exemplary public servants who have contributed significantly to the growth and prosperity of their respective communities; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy person is Mr. Luther Masingill, who has been a fixture on WDEF Radio in Chattanooga for nearly seventy years and a vital part of WDEF Television since it began broadcasting in 1954; he has earned both the Tennessee Association of Broadcaster's Distinguished Service Award and the coveted Marconi Award for his professional excellence; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Masingill's longstanding tenure in radio broadcasting began on New Year's Eve 1940; nearly seven decades later, Luther continues to proudly serve the listeners of WDEF; and

WHEREAS, the "longest running radio announcer on the same station in the U.S.," Mr. Masingill is the only current broadcaster in America to have announced the news of both the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, and the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Masingill acts as a true friend to all of his listeners on his morning drive radio show; from finding bus schedules for listeners to reporting problems like potholes, missing street signs, and locations of needed traffic signals to city officials, he is never "too busy" to offer his assistance; and

WHEREAS, a member of America's greatest generation and a World War II veteran, Mr. Masingill also remains active on WDEF Television, doing his daily Community Calendar on the

morning show, his ever popular "Dog Gone" segment on the noon news, and his "Life with Luther" feature on the evening news; and

WHEREAS, an active and devoted member of his community, Mr. Masingill is credited with reuniting more animals with their owners than the City Humane Society, finding clothing and furniture for families who have lost their homes to fire, and finding heaters or air conditioning units for those in need; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to name a segment of the Chattanooga street that is home to WDEF, namely Broad street, in honor of Luther Masingill as a token of our esteem for him, both as a broadcaster and as a citizen; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the segment of Broad Street (U.S. Highways 11 and 72) in the City of Chattanooga from such street's intersection with West 32nd Street southward to its intersection with Tennessee Avenue (State Route 17), such segment including the WDEF studios at 3300 Broad Street, is hereby designated the "Luther Masingill Parkway" as a lasting tribute to an excellent broadcaster and public servant and even more accomplished human being.

SECTION 2. The department of transportation is directed to erect suitable signs or to affix suitable markers designating the segment of Broad Street described in Section 1 as the "Luther Masingill Parkway".

SECTION 3. The erection of such directional signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

SECTION 4. This act shall become operative only if the federal highway administrator advises the commissioner of transportation in writing that the provisions of this act shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

SECTION 5. This act shall become operative only if the cost of the manufacture and installation of such signs is paid to the department of transportation from non-state funds within one (1) year of the effective date of this act. Such payment shall be made prior to any

expenditure by the state for the manufacture or installation of such signs. The department shall return any unused portion of the estimated cost to the person or entity paying for such signs within thirty (30) days of the erection of such signs. If the actual cost exceeds the estimated cost, an amount equal to the difference in such costs shall be remitted to the department in non-state funds within thirty (30) days of the sponsoring person or entity receiving an itemized invoice of the actual cost from the department.

SECTION 6. The appellation "Luther Masingill Parkway" provided for in this act is for honorary purposes only and nothing contained herein shall be construed as requiring the alteration of any address, or the governmental system for assigning addresses, in any county, municipality or other governmental entity affected by this act.

SECTION 7. Nothing contained in this act shall be construed as requiring the alteration of any previously named segment or segments of any highway described in this act as the "Luther Masingill Parkway".

SECTION 8. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.