

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 74

By Whitson

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Samuel Clifford Gant of Franklin.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Samuel Clifford Gant; and

WHEREAS, Samuel Gant was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, born on July 11, 1933, Samuel Clifford Gant was the son of Theodore Finley and Ella Strickling Gant and grew up on the family farm near Lowell, Ohio, with his brothers, James Carl, William Clyde, Theodore Cecil, Elmer Clell, and Ray Calvin; and

WHEREAS, he attended Lowell School, where he met his future wife, Norma Lee Miller, in second grade; after his graduation in 1951, he worked for a year as a manager trainee for F.W. Woolworth Company before enlisting in the United States Air Force; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gant completed basic training at Sampson Air Force Base, New York, before being transferred to Sheppard Air Force Base in Wichita Falls, Texas, where he received six months training in aircraft and engine mechanics; and

WHEREAS, after additional training in instructional techniques, he was assigned to duty as a technical instructor and assistant phase supervisor in jet engine mechanics at Sheppard Air Force Base; and

WHEREAS, during this period of time, he was joined in holy matrimony with his long-time sweetheart, Norma Lee Miller, on September 25, 1953; the following year, their joyous union was blessed with the birth of a daughter, Diana, on July 25, 1954; and

WHEREAS, after receiving his honorable discharge from military service after attaining the rank of Staff Sergeant, Mr. Gant returned to the Woolworth Company as an assistant

manager in a store in Columbus, Ohio, where he worked for one year before going to work for Sears Roebuck; and

WHEREAS, leaving Sears Roebuck after one year, he enrolled in David Lipscomb College in Nashville under the G.I. Bill; he worked part time at Sears while attending college, and his wife, Norma, worked as a secretary to help support the family; and

WHEREAS, in 1961, Mr. Gant received his Bachelor of Arts degree, graduating *magna cum laude*, and enrolled in the Master of Arts program at George Peabody College while working part time at David Lipscomb College and serving as minister at Peytonsville Church of Christ; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gant was appointed a full-time faculty member at Lipscomb one year later and continued in his ministerial career, serving as minister of Arrington Church of Christ in Nolensville and later at Bethel Church of Christ in Shop Springs after leaving Peytonsville; and

WHEREAS, he received his Master of Arts degree in 1963 and, in 1970, accepted an associate professor of English position at Nashville State Community College, where he later became department head and was promoted to full professor; he received his Ph.D. from Peabody College, Vanderbilt University in 1977; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gant retired from teaching in 1998, having served as Professor of History after stepping down as department head five years before his retirement; he continued to teach part time through 2002 as a professor emeritus; and

WHEREAS, an elder at Concord Road Church of Christ since 1981, Mr. Gant and his wife volunteered to lead a mission effort in Odessa, Ukraine each year from 1991 to 1998 and returned in 2000 and 2008; the Gants visited England, Scotland, France, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Sweden, Russia, Greece, Turkey, Mexico, Canada, Russia, and Ghana; and

WHEREAS, an active part of his community, he served as an officer in a local historical preservation group, Save The Franklin Battlefield, Inc., and rendered sterling service as a

member of the Franklin Mayor's Battlefield Task Force, the Battlefield Preservation Commission, the Civil War Historic Commission, and the Franklin 150th Committee; and

WHEREAS, he was a member of the Fort Donelson Camp No. 62 (FDC) of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, where he held a number of posts over the years, including Department Patriotic Instructor, Department Junior Vice Commander, Department Senior Vice Commander, Department Commander, and Camp Commander; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to honors and accolades, Sam Gant served as Grand Marshal for the Korean War veterans for the 2012 Franklin Veterans' Day Parade and received the Distinguished Service Medal from the Sons of Veterans Reserve and multiple Meritorious Service Awards from the SUVCW; and

WHEREAS, he stepped down as an elder at Concord Road Church of Christ in October 2014 after thirty-three years but continued to teach his Sunday morning Bible class, which he had led since the mid-1970s; and

WHEREAS, Sam Gant was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Sam Gant leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Samuel Clifford Gant, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Gant.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.