

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 197

By Ragan

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Dr. Gene Caldwell of Oak Ridge.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the death of our former colleague, Dr. Gene Caldwell of Oak Ridge; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Caldwell 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, a servant-hearted leader, Dr. Gene Caldwell rendered a lifetime of invaluable service to this State in various capacities, contributing greatly to the advancement of societal ideals and the quality of life for all citizens; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Gene Caldwell was for many years a prominent and highly influential figure in the political, social, and civic lives of Oak Ridge and Anderson County, always working diligently to ensure the voices of the citizens in these communities were heard and their concerns addressed; and

WHEREAS, in 1996, the constituents of House District 33 evinced their great faith in the political and governmental capabilities of Dr. Gene Caldwell by electing him as their representative to the General Assembly, a position in which he performed admirably; and

WHEREAS, during his three terms and six years in the House of Representatives, Dr. Caldwell was a prominent, dedicated, and well-informed legislator who always voted his conscience; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Gene Caldwell was a dynamic and aggressive participant in the legislative process and earned the respect and admiration of his colleagues for his outstanding contributions and his service as a member of the House Education Committee, the House

Health and Human Services Committee, and the TennCare Oversight Committee, which he served deftly as chairman; and

WHEREAS, a tireless champion for the rights of children, Dr. Caldwell fought passionately on their behalf; he sought to improve Tennessee's child care delivery system through innovative legislation such as the "child care ratio" bill, which mandated a decrease in the number of children supervised by each child care worker; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Gene Caldwell understood the connection between quality education and success in adult life, and he worked with purpose and commitment to provide adequate funding for, and to otherwise advance the noble causes of, education at all levels; and

WHEREAS, a gentleman who truly appreciated the responsibilities as well as the privileges of leadership, Dr. Caldwell served as a member of many community, civic, and statewide organizations, including the Alpha Kappa Alumni Association, Alpha Gamma Rho; the University of Tennessee Alumni Association, Executive Committee and Board of Alumni Governors; the Roane-Anderson Economic Council; the Tennessee Economic Council; the Girls Club of Oak Ridge, Sustaining Membership Chairman; the Oak Ridge Charter Commission; the RID; the Methodist Medical Center Foundation; the Chamber of Commerce, Oak Ridge and Anderson County; and the March of Dimes Foundation, East Tennessee Chapter, Program Services Committee and Grant Awards Committee; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Caldwell served as a board member of the Tennessee Technology Development Corporation, chair of the State Certificate of Need for Health Care, co-chair of the professional division of Anderson County United Way, a member of the Department of Human Services Standards Committee on Day Care, and a member of the Tennessee Childhood Education and Training Act Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, from 2008 until his passing, Dr. Caldwell served as co-chair of Emory Valley Center Capital Campaign, helping raise nearly \$3.5 million for a new facility; and

WHEREAS, born in Obion County on March 14, 1932, Gene Caldwell was the son of Georgie B. and Evelyn Brown Pruett Caldwell and grew up on his parents' farm in Woodland Mills; and

WHEREAS, he graduated from Woodland Mills High School in 1949; he received his Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture from the University of Tennessee in 1953 and a pre-medical degree from Vanderbilt University in 1957; in 1960, he completed a medical degree at the University of Tennessee in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Caldwell nobly defended his country during both the Korean and Vietnam wars, serving as a Line Officer in the United States Navy from 1953 to 1957 and as a public relations officer in Nashville during the 1950s, attaining the rank of Lieutenant; he served in the Navy's Medical Corps from 1960 to 1967 and attained the rank of Lieutenant Commander; from 1963 to 1967, he served as the Chief of Pediatrics at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, in 1966, Dr. Gene Caldwell moved to Anderson County, where he practiced pediatrics at the Children's Clinic in Oak Ridge for twenty-seven years, serving as staff pediatrician; and

WHEREAS, a Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Gene Caldwell served as chief of staff of the Oak Ridge Hospital, on the Board of Directors for the Fort Sanders Management Group and Preferred Health Partnership Board, and as a volunteer lobbyist for the Tennessee Pediatric Society; and

WHEREAS, for his unparalleled devotion to public service and the rights of children, Dr. Gene Caldwell received numerous awards and honors, including the Outstanding Alumni award from Alpha Gamma Rho, Alpha Kappa in 1975 and 1993; Volunteer of the Year honors from the Girls Club in 1988; the Chapter Achievement Award as a Children's Advocate from the American Academy of Pediatrics in 1996; the East Tennessee Legislator of the Year award from the East Tennessee Resource Agency Area Agency on Aging in 1998; the Tennessee Children's Champion award from the Tennessee Association of Education for Young Children in 2000; the Legislator of the Year award from the Tennessee chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics in 2002; and the Distinguished Service award from the Tennessee Academy of Family Physicians in 2002; and

WHEREAS, in his later years, Dr. Caldwell enjoyed reading, traveling, walking the Emory Valley Trail, and attending Oak Ridge High School basketball games; an avid University

of Tennessee Lady Vols fan, he followed them each season and nearly always attended their championship games; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his parents, Dr. Caldwell was preceded in death by his wife of nearly fifty-one years, Bobbie; one granddaughter, Sarah Caldwell; and his sister, Carol, who died only one week prior to his passing; and

WHEREAS, he is survived by three daughters, Debbie (Curt) Bader, Amanda Caldwell (Jimmy) Long, and Jennifer (Chris) Weaver; one son, Randy Caldwell; eight grandchildren, Nathan and Jeremy Birdwhistell, Ian Caldwell, Cameron and Bailey Weaver, and Sean, Sarah, and Adam Spaid; three step-grandchildren, Hannah, Emily, and Jacob Long; and five great-grandchildren, Jason and Katie Birdwhistell and Hailey, Kelsey, and Harper Birdwhistell; and

WHEREAS, in his nearly eighty-five years, Dr. Gene Caldwell gave selflessly of his time and talents for the betterment of Tennesseans in Anderson County and beyond; 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 TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Dr. Gene Caldwell, 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 Dr. Caldwell.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.