

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 231

By Hazlewood

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Sam Powell of Signal Mountain.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Sam Powell; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Powell was an exemplary public servant and lifelong environmental conservationist, contributing greatly to conservation efforts in Hamilton County; such was his reputation as a guardian of the land that, upon his death, the mayor of Signal Mountain remarked, "Signal Mountain lost its Lorax," referring to the Dr. Seuss character known for his efforts to protect the environment; and

WHEREAS, Sam Powell graduated from high school in 1950 and began working for Duck River Electric as a groundman; shortly thereafter, he became employed with the Tennessee Valley Authority as a lineman, a job that entailed traveling across West Tennessee to build power lines in rural locations; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Powell's legacy lies in his devotion to preserving and protecting the natural world; to that end, he was a founding member of both the Cumberland Trail and the Tennessee River Gorge Trust; he helped build Shackelford Ridge County Park on Signal Mountain; and he was the first chairman of the Cumberland Trail Conference; and

WHEREAS, one of the foundational experiences in Sam Powell's life, and perhaps what contributed to his love of the outdoors, was his involvement with the Boy Scouts of America; the organization gave him a keen appreciation of maps, and every time he moved to a new city, he studied its road and topographic maps, learning important physical features of the land—knowledge that would later help him change the face of Chattanooga; and

WHEREAS, while in the Boy Scouts, Sam Powell attained the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest honor bestowed by the organization and a feat not many achieve; because of his Eagle

Scout status, when he later enlisted to serve his country as a member of the United States Armed Forces, he was sent directly from basic training to leadership school in Augusta, Georgia, with the commander citing his Scouting achievement as an indicator of his potential and commitment; and

WHEREAS, around 1975, when the Tennessee Trails Association formed to bolster a proposed 330-mile hiking trail along the eastern escarpment of Tennessee's Cumberland Plateau, Sam Powell was contacted to help raise awareness for its southern trailhead; he knew Signal Mountain's ridges and gullies as no one else did, and, as an Eagle Scout, he knew a trail should follow a land's natural contour lines. Thus, he was an ideal advocate and leader for the project; and

WHEREAS, not only did he have a thorough knowledge of the land and mapping experience, he also had manpower in his Scout troop, who soon took on the Cumberland Trail project as their own; with Mr. Powell as leader, the troop made great strides toward making the trail a reality; and

WHEREAS, today, 190 miles of the trail have been completed, with the northern terminus in Cumberland Gap National Historical Park and the southern terminus at Signal Point, part of the Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park, on Signal Mountain; this was possible, in large part, because of Sam Powell's dedication and leadership; and

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

WHEREAS, he enjoyed the loving companionship of his wife, Emilie, who predeceased him; and

WHEREAS, Sam Powell will be remembered as a steadfast steward of the land who had the ability to unify people toward a common goal of protecting the environment; he was a conservationist of the highest order, and through his efforts, citizens and visitors of Hamilton County will continue to enjoy the area's pristine natural environs; 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 ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE

CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Sam Powell, 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. Powell.

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