

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 259

By Johnson C

A RESOLUTION to honor Billy Atkins on the occasion of his retirement from banking.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are pleased to recognize a gentleman who, for the past sixty years, has brought passion to community banking and built a legendary brand and culture based on integrity, selflessness, and service in the process; and

WHEREAS, Billy Atkins of Clarksville is taking a much-deserved retirement after an unparalleled sixty-year career in banking, although he will continue to serve as senior chairman of the board of Legends Bank; and

WHEREAS, at the age of seventeen, Mr. Atkins began working for Northern Bank of Tennessee while still a student at Montgomery Central High School; he was a model employee who quickly advanced through the ranks and found his niche in commercial banking; and

WHEREAS, during his twenty-eight-year tenure with Northern Bank, he received banking certifications and graduated from programs such as the Consumer Lending School and Commercial School at Vanderbilt University and the Graduate School of Banking of the South at Louisiana State University; and

WHEREAS, he was senior vice president and a member of the board of directors when Northern Bank was sold to First American National Bank in 1988; as an executive with First American, Mr. Atkins led the Clarksville market as senior vice president and senior credit officer until being named city president in 1993; and

WHEREAS, facing yet another merger, Mr. Atkins decided to return to the heart of community banking by founding a new bank based upon the value of personal relationships; and

WHEREAS, Legends Bank was chartered and opened its doors for business on November 12, 1998, in downtown Clarksville; from its initial nine million dollars in assets and one location, the bank has grown to nearly 500 million dollars in assets with eight offices in three counties in Middle Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, during Legend Bank's twenty-year history, Mr. Atkins has provided inspiring leadership as its president, chief executive officer, and chairman of the board of directors; by integrating his career with his community service, he has helped improve the quality of life in his community while also ensuring its future growth and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, long an ardent supporter of Austin Peay State University (APSU), he was appointed by Governor Bill Haslam to serve on the university's inaugural board of trustees; he is also a member of the board's executive committee and audit committee and chairman of the budget and finance committee; and

WHEREAS, the past chairman of the APSU Foundation Board, Mr. Atkins chaired the university's capital campaign and is a member of the Tower Club; and

WHEREAS, a major supporter of Austin Peay athletics, both emotionally and financially, he serves on the Athletics Committee, is a member of the Red Coat Society, and is past president of the Gobs Club; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Atkins has played an important role in economic and industrial development in his community, having served as president of the Clarksville Area Chamber of Commerce, a three-term member and four-time chairman of the Industrial Development Board of Montgomery County, and a member of the Economic Development Council board, and was involved in bringing Hankook and LG Industries to the Clarksville area; and

WHEREAS, he has also given back to his community as president of St. Bethlehem Civitan Club, a life member of the Masonic Lodge, chairman of the Montgomery County Heart Association, division chair and treasurer for the United Way, and a trustee of the Consumer Lending School for the Tennessee Bankers Association; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, Mr. Atkins was named by Governor Haslam to serve on the Foundation Board of Homeland Security and Department of Safety; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, he has received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Clarksville Area Chamber of Commerce, the John Hopson Memorial Award from the Montgomery County Cattleman's Association, and the Leader of Banking Excellence designation from the Tennessee Bankers Association; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Atkins is indeed fortunate to share love and companionship with his loyal wife of fifty-seven years, Sue; their daughters, Luann and Julie; granddaughter; Britney; and canine companions, Boo Boo and Lucy; and

WHEREAS, Billy Atkins has made countless contributions to the banking industry, Austin Peay, the Clarksville-Montgomery County community, and the State of Tennessee, and he is richly deserving of our accolades on this special occasion; 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 and commend Billy Atkins upon his exemplary career, salute his commitment to community banking and public service, and extend to him our best wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement.

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