

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 499

By Sargent

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize Judge Jane Crockett Franks for her years of service to the children and families of Williamson County.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly pause to specially recognize those esteemed Tennesseans who, in their time as public servants, have striven to improve the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, Judge Jane Crockett Franks is one such noteworthy individual; on May 21, 2009, Tennessee Bank and Trust, the Williamson County Bar Association, and a host of Tennessee's first citizens will join in celebrating the life and career of this remarkable woman; and

WHEREAS, born Christmas Day, 1932, Elizabeth Jane Crockett Franks is the daughter of Frances Hereford and David T. Crockett, Jr.; after attending the Burton School and Peabody Demonstration School, she began attending Hillsboro High School; and

WHEREAS, in her senior year at Hillsboro, she withdrew from school to marry J.N. Franks, Jr., and the couple began building houses together in Nashville; by the time Mrs. Franks reached her thirtieth birthday, the couple had eight children; and

WHEREAS, when one of her daughters asked her where she had attended college, Mrs. Franks grew embarrassed, hesitating to reveal that she had not graduated from high school; Mrs. Franks realized that she would have to pursue an education if she wanted to inspire her children to do the same; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Franks undertook her task with singular determination and an energy that few could match; she earned her General Educational Development credential and soon thereafter enrolled in Peabody College, from which she earned a degree in Elementary

Education. In her final year at Peabody, Mrs. Franks enrolled in the Nashville School of Law; and

WHEREAS, in her final year of college, she was working toward an undergraduate degree while maintaining a family that had grown to include eleven children and two grandchildren while attending night classes in pursuit of a professional degree; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from the Nashville School of Law and passing the bar examination in 1971, Mrs. Franks opened her own law practice in the Stahlman Building in downtown Nashville; during this early phase of her career, she and Mr. Franks had their twelfth child; and

WHEREAS, in 1972, the Franks bought a farm in Williamson County, on which they built a new home; in 1977, she opened an office on the square in Franklin in order to be closer to the family's Williamson County farm; and

WHEREAS, less than a month after opening her Franklin office, Mrs. Franks was appointed to serve as a Judge in the General Sessions Court; and

WHEREAS, for nearly twenty years, Judge Jane Franks would serve as the only General Sessions and Juvenile Judge in Williamson County, winning elections in 1978, 1982, and 1990; and

WHEREAS, Judge Franks assumed the Juvenile Court Jurisdiction in 1982, and in this capacity she made an enormous impact on the lives of countless Williamson County children and families; her legacy includes the establishment of a number of institutions devoted to improving the lives of local children, including a comprehensive juvenile justice center in Williamson County; and

WHEREAS, she also helped found Williamson County Youth, Incorporated, a non-profit organization which provides shelter for abused, neglected, and homeless children; she created an active public service program in which juveniles and adults provide Williamson County with thousands of hours of community service every year; and

WHEREAS, Judge Franks was instrumental in organizing the Alternative Learning Center; operated by the Juvenile Court in cooperation with the public school systems, the

Center provides continuing education for students unable to attend regular school for brief periods of time; and

WHEREAS, one of Judge Franks's most notable achievements must surely be the Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children, which served 250 abused and neglected children in 2008 alone; and

WHEREAS, although she retired from the bench in 1995, Judge Franks continued to serve the people of Williamson County as a Juvenile Court Referee from 1995 to 1997;

WHEREAS, highly active in her faith community, the Honorable Jane Franks played the organ for fourteen years at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Franklin, where she and most of her family have been members since 1975; she currently belongs to the Worship and Planning Committee as well as the Altar Guild; and

WHEREAS, Judge Franks has expressed the artistic and creative aspects of her nature through classical piano study at Blair Academy and the writing of poetry; much of her verse is dedicated to one or more of her thirty-three grandchildren or ten great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, after her husband died in 1992, Judge Franks chose to stay close to her children by remaining in Williamson County; she often works at Boxwood Bistro, owned by her son and daughter-in-law; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the joys of family, music, poetry, and service to her church, Judge Franks loves to play bridge with her friends; and

WHEREAS, the State of Tennessee, the strength of our communities, and the overall vitality of our society depend, in great measure, on the dedication of people like the Honorable Jane Franks who use their considerable talents and resources to serve others; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and recognize Judge Jane Crockett Franks for her years of service to the children and families of Williamson County, thank her for all she has done to improve the lives of so many of her fellow Tennesseans, and wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

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