

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 683

By Hale

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Kyle Owen of Smith County upon his selection as the 2023 Tennessee Farmer of the Year.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly salute those citizens who, through their extraordinary efforts, have distinguished themselves as agricultural leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such outstanding person is Kyle Owen, who was named the 2023 Tennessee Farmer of the Year by the University of Tennessee Extension and advanced to compete in the thirty-third annual Southeastern Farmer of the Year competition at the Sunbelt Ag Expo in Moultrie, Georgia; and

WHEREAS, the Farmer of the Year Awards highlight each farmer's long and distinguished career in ag production, marketing, business management, applied research, environmental innovations, community service, and contributions to industry-related organizations and their community; and

WHEREAS, Kyle Owen worked in the construction industry following high school until 2004, when, at the age of twenty-one, he realized his dream of full-time farming, his love of the land having been inspired by his father, a local elementary school principal, who had always grown a few acres of tobacco and overseen a small cattle operation; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Owen leased a thirty-two-acre piece of land on a livestock farm and, with the help of a few neighbors, rounded up equipment and planted his first profitable crop; and

WHEREAS, by 2011, he bought his first farm, complete with equipment, and cultivated nearly 300 acres of tobacco; he went on to lease an additional 350 acres to diversify his operation with corn and soybeans, and he eventually acquired a total of 6,340 acres; and

WHEREAS, in addition to growing staple crops such as corn and wheat, Mr. Owen recently began growing watermelons in conjunction with another local farmer, and he plans to dedicate additional acreage for pumpkins; and

WHEREAS, Kyle Owen has also taken steps to preserve the environment by increasing his use of cover crops to avoid erosion, improving soil quality and supplying nutrients, and using precision agriculture technologies, including automatic boom and row shutoffs to control chemical applications; and

WHEREAS, a highly respected member of his community and the agricultural industry, Mr. Owen serves as a member of several local organizations and boards, including the Tennessee Corn Growers Association, the Smith Farmers Co-Op, the Smith County Soil Conservation District, the Smith County Farm Bureau, the Smith County Extension Row Crop Advisory Council, and the Smith Utility District, which he serves as commissioner; and

WHEREAS, he also served on the Tennessee Farm Bureau Tobacco Council and the Tennessee Farm Credit Advisory Board and as a participant of several studies sponsored by the University of Tennessee Extension Crop Fertility program; nationally, he is a member of the Farm Credit Mid-America Advisory Council, the National Corn Growers Association, and the National Federation of Independent Businesses; and

WHEREAS, Kyle Owen participates in the Farm Bureau Ag in the Classroom and hosts the University of Tennessee Extension Haylage and Cover Crop Field Days; he is also an Altria Summer Internship Host Farm; and

WHEREAS, his many accomplishments aside, Mr. Owen is most appreciative of the love and support he shares with his beloved wife of eleven years and office manager of Kyle Owen Farms, Miranda Leigh, with whom he shares two daughters, Finleigh Mai and Nealee Rae; and

WHEREAS, Kyle Owen exemplifies the spirit and dedication that are characteristic of a true Tennessean, and we find it appropriate to honor and commend such an outstanding and remarkable individual; 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 and congratulate Kyle Owen of Smith County upon his selection as the 2023 Tennessee Farmer of the Year and extend to him our best wishes for much continued success in all his 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 and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.