

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 692

By Mumpower

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Nelson Andrews of Nashville.

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

WHEREAS, Mr. Andrews was an exemplary Tennessean and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, instrumental in the development and growth of Nashville into the vibrant metropolitan city it is today, Nelson Andrews was a visionary civic leader and esteemed businessman; and

WHEREAS, deeply respected in the business community of this State and the Southeast, Mr. Andrews founded Brookside Properties, a real estate firm with residential and commercial holdings across the region, and he played a crucial role in the creation of the Better Business Bureau of Nashville/Middle Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, of all the roles he played, Nelson Andrews' most influential was as a member of the Watauga group, a society of Nashville business leaders devoted to long-range civic planning; the Watauga group was pivotal in the creation of the Metro Nashville Airport Authority and Leadership Nashville, among many other important local institutions, and the group also advocated for better public schools and more genial race relations in the city; and

WHEREAS, although the Watauga group was an initiative of the city's business elite, it ultimately served as a forerunner of Nashville's Agenda, the city-wide visioning process in which thousands of Nashvillians have participated; Mr. Andrews personally helped to foster the creation of Nashville's Agenda and served on both its original steering committee in 1993 and the guiding body of its update in 2007; and

WHEREAS, Nelson Andrews was born in Washington, D.C., into a family with Nashville roots; because his father was a career officer in the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the family lived in various far-flung locales, including the Panama Canal Zone and the San Francisco Bay area, before settling in Nashville during Nelson Andrews high school years; and

WHEREAS, uncle Lieutenant General Frank Maxwell Andrews, the military aviation pioneer after whom Andrews Air Force Base was named, once took his nephew along for a pleasure cruise in his command aircraft over Nashville in the late 1930s; throughout his life, Nelson Andrews regarded this as one of his most cherished memories; and

WHEREAS, in 1945, Nelson Andrews graduated as Valedictorian from Montgomery Bell Academy; at the encouragement of his aunt, General Andrews' widow, Nelson Andrews accepted an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point, where he played on the school's national champion football team for two years alongside Heisman Trophy winners Doc Blanchard and Glenn Davis; and

WHEREAS, although he achieved great success at West Point, even earning the academy's Best of the Cadets in Physical Condition designation at one point, Mr. Andrews chose to resign his commission in 1947 and return to Nashville to attend Vanderbilt University, where he planned to continue playing football; and

WHEREAS, on the very first day of practice with his new team, Nelson Andrews was injured, and while he could have become a waterboy to keep his scholarship, he chose to pay his own way through school; he earned money by forming a hillbilly band, the Tennessee Dew Drops, and playing poker; and

WHEREAS, despite the demands of work and school, Nelson Andrews still found time to devote to Vanderbilt's rich social life; he even assumed the presidency of the Beta Theta Pi fraternity; and

WHEREAS, he also met Susan Adams at Vanderbilt, and in 1949, just after graduation, the couple married; and

WHEREAS, Nelson Andrews began his career in Nashville at the A.J. Smith Company, and he later became President of McClure's Department Stores; even in his early years, he was deeply involved in Nashville's most prestigious and influential civic organizations, including the Junior Chamber of Commerce, which he served as President in 1958; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Andrews helped lead the Junior Chamber's successful effort to establish metropolitan government in Nashville and Davidson County; he chaired the Nashville-Davidson County Red Cross in 1965, and he was also deeply involved in the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, which he served as President in 1970; and

WHEREAS, in 1976, Nelson Andrews and his fellow Watauga group members helped establish Leadership Nashville; from its founding, the program has striven to provide a "three-dimensional view" of Nashville to participants, comprised of the city's current and emerging leaders from all fields of endeavor; and

WHEREAS, outside of his role as a member of the Watauga group, he worked on behalf of Tennessee's students as Chairman of the Tennessee Board of Education in the 1980s and 1990s, in which position he guided the creation of a new funding mechanism for the state's public schools; he was also a key figure in the formation of the Nashville Alliance for Public Education; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Andrews was a Trustee Emeritus of Vanderbilt University, and he played a decisive role in the creation of Vanderbilt's Childrens Hospital; and

WHEREAS, he was a longtime Trustee of Montgomery Bell Academy, and he also served Belmont and David Lipscomb Universities in various capacities; and

WHEREAS, deeply committed to a more just and prosperous Tennessee, Mr. Andrews was serving as Chairman of the Tennessee Tax Structure Study Commission at the time of his passing; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades over the course of his illustrious life, Nelson Andrews received the Pencil Foundation's E. Bronson Ingram Award, the Montgomery Bell Academy Distinguished Alumnus Award, the Nashville Public School System's School Bell Award, the American Cancer Society's John C. Tune Award, the Kiwanis Outstanding Nashvillian of the Year Award, and the National Council of Christians and Jews Brotherhood Award; and

WHEREAS, in early 2009, Easter Seals Tennessee announced that Nelson Andrews was to be named its Nashvillian of the Year in a ceremony scheduled for late June; the event will be held as a celebration of Mr. Andrews' life; and

WHEREAS, known as a man of many talents and a ferocious competitor on the field of sport, Mr. Andrews once created a list of his favorite pastimes, which included, “helicopter pilot, racquetball (former city and state champion), tennis, musician, silversmith, unicyclist, apiarist”; and

WHEREAS, Nelson Andrews 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 of sixty years, Susan Adams Andrews, who survives him; he will also be sorely missed by his daughter and son-in-law, Dr. Susan Toy Andrews and Dr. Randall Rickard; his son and daughter-in-law, Nelson Carter Andrews, Jr., and Nanette Piot Andrews; his daughter, Judith Ann Andrews; his son and daughter-in-law, Adam “Lep” Gillespie Andrews and Tami Jones Andrews; his son and daughter-in-law, Frank Maxwell Andrews and Denise Wiley Matlock Andrews; his sisters-in-law, Evalina Harwell Andrews and Faith Adams Young; and his twenty-one grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Nelson Andrews was preceded in death by his brother, James David Andrews III; and

WHEREAS, one of Nashville’s leading citizens and a man of enormous energy, Nelson Andrews leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that 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 SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Nelson Andrews, 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. Andrews.

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