

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 791

By Hazlewood

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of John Patten Guerry of Chattanooga.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of John Patten Guerry, a highly respected civic leader and retired businessman, at the age of ninety-eight; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Guerry was a stalwart in his community and took great pleasure in helping his fellow citizens who were in need; and

WHEREAS, he was inspired by a deep and abiding love for Chattanooga and served on and led many boards and organizations, including Rotary, the United Way, the Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce, Memorial Hospital, the Chattanooga Community Foundation, the University of Chattanooga Foundation, and the YMCA, among many others; and

WHEREAS, a native of Chattanooga, Mr. Guerry attended Baylor School and Sewanee Military Academy, from which he graduated in 1943; soon afterward, he answered the call of duty to serve as a U.S. Army rifle platoon leader in World War II and was wounded while engaged in combat in Germany in 1944; and

WHEREAS, despite being seriously wounded, he continued to lead his troops in an operation of clearing buildings that resulted in the capture of twenty-seven German soldiers; for his heroism in the line of fire, Mr. Guerry was awarded the Bronze Star for Valor along with a Purple Heart, the Combat Infantry Badge, and the ETO Ribbon with one battle star; and

WHEREAS, after completing his military service, Mr. Guerry attended the University of the South at Sewanee, from which he graduated Phi Beta Kappa; he also served as president of the student body and was a standout on the football and tennis teams; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Guerry then worked as a teacher at Baylor and at the American National Bank before being recalled to the Army to serve in the Korean War as first lieutenant in a tank company; and

WHEREAS, after the war, Mr. Guerry earned his Juris Doctorate from McKenzie Law School before joining his family's medicine company (later Chattem and Sanofi); and

WHEREAS, in 1977, Mr. Guerry became the chief executive officer of First Federal Savings and Loan, a position in which he served with distinction until his retirement in 1987; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his success in banking and public service, Mr. Guerry possessed a lifelong passion for tennis, playing in and winning many tournaments; in recognition of his prowess on the court, he was inducted into the Tennessee Tennis Hall of Fame, Chattanooga Sports Hall of Fame, and the University of the South Athletic Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, deeply devoted to his family, Mr. Guerry loved spending time with his grandchildren and taking yearly trips to the beach with his immediate and extended family; and

WHEREAS, a man of great faith, Mr. Guerry was a longtime member of the Church of the Good Shepherd Episcopal Church on Lookout Mountain and a member of the Waters Sunday School class at the First Baptist Church in the Golden Gateway; and

WHEREAS, John Patten Guerry is survived by his wife of fifty-eight years, Carolyn; two sons, Pat and Bill; two daughters-in-law, Tracy and Tucker; four grandchildren, Charlotte, John, Virginia, and Ann Wright; and many nephews, nieces, and cousins; and

WHEREAS, he was preceded in death by his parents, Alexander and Charlotte Patten Guerry; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Guerry leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, benevolence and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional civic leader, businessman, and human being; 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 the memory of John Patten Guerry, reflecting fondly upon his enduring legacy of courage during wartime, compassion during peacetime, and excellence during his careers in medicine and banking.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Guerry.

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.