

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 971

By Cooper

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor Dr. Altha Stewart for her meritorious service to the State of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should specially recognize those medical professionals who, throughout their years of service, have shone as beacons of dedication and excellence; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Altha Stewart is one such remarkable individual, who has been selected to lead a new initiative to further extend the work of the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) into the community as Senior Associate Dean for Community Health Engagement; and

WHEREAS, an associate professor of psychiatry and the chief of Social and Community Psychiatry at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, Dr. Stewart is considered a national expert in public sector and minority issues in mental health care and in the effects of trauma and violence on children; she is also the founder and director of the Youth Advocacy Coalition, which opened in late August at the university; and

WHEREAS, in her new role, Dr. Altha Stewart will develop the "Everyone Has a Provider" program envisioned by UT College of Medicine Executive Dean Scott Strome, M.D.; a work in progress, the initiative aims to meet unmet healthcare needs in the community by expanding access to health care to every individual in Shelby County; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Stewart plans to begin the initiative with a needs assessment in the community in order to improve access to care for those with chronic medical conditions such as hypertension, cardiovascular problems, diabetes, and COPD; and

WHEREAS, access to care could involve connecting individuals with physicians, nurse practitioners, counselors, community clinics, nutrition information, mental health services, and

other healthcare providers with the goal of helping people become a partner in their own health;
and

WHEREAS, Dr. Altha Stewart came to UTHSC in 2015 to lead the Center for Justice Involved Youth and has since taken the lead on Defending Childhood Shelby County, a community initiative to improve the lives of children in the area; and

WHEREAS, long a champion for juvenile justice, Dr. Stewart was previously a psychiatrist for the Shelby County Public Defender's Office, in which position she worked to improve statewide services for youth with behavioral health needs who landed in the juvenile justice system; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Altha Stewart has also served as New York City's commissioner of mental health and chief executive officer of a children's psychiatric hospital in New York, and she managed one of the country's largest public health systems in Detroit; and

WHEREAS, a native of South Memphis, Dr. Stewart was among the first class of women to attend what is now Christian Brothers University; she graduated from Temple University Medical School and was a resident at Hahnemann University Hospital; and

WHEREAS, we find it appropriate to acknowledge and applaud Dr. Altha Stewart for her many contributions to the citizens of this State; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we recognize and honor Dr. Altha Stewart for her meritorious service to the State of Tennessee, congratulate her on her selection as Senior Associate Dean for Community Health Engagement, and extend to her our best wishes for every future success.

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.