

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 985

By Carr

A RESOLUTION to recognize Gary L. West on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this General Assembly should honor those individuals who have performed with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm throughout their years of public service; and

WHEREAS, Gary L. West is one such estimable individual, who served with distinction for more than thirty-seven years in leadership roles in local, municipal, and state government, working diligently to improve the lives of his fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, Mr. West served admirably as the deputy commissioner of the Fire Prevention Division at the Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance beginning in March 2011, when he was appointed to the post by Commissioner Julie Mix McPeak; and

WHEREAS, during his laudable tenure, his focus was on fire prevention; the success of his endeavors is most clearly evidenced by Tennessee's adjusted ranking from the National Fire Protection Association; and

WHEREAS, under Gary West's leadership, the State Fire Marshal's Office took a comprehensive approach to preventing fires by strengthening partnerships with local fire departments, identifying fire risk within communities, and increasing the availability of fire safety education and working smoke alarms for Tennessee residents; and

WHEREAS, one particularly successful initiative, the "Get Alarmed, Tennessee!" smoke alarm program, was developed in 2012 to provide a basic level of fire prevention education and smoke alarm protection for Tennesseans; the State Fire Marshal's Office and its fire service partners have documented 223 lives saved from potential fire danger since the program began, a statistic that stands as perhaps Mr. West's proudest accomplishment during his time as deputy commissioner of the Fire Prevention Division; and

WHEREAS, a leader in his field, Gary West contributed his time and numerous talents to serving in leadership roles in the National Association of State Fire Marshals and various other local and national organizations focused on fire prevention and building codes; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Mr. West was recognized by the Southeastern Association of Fire Chiefs in 2015 with the prestigious H.D. Crossnine Award, which honors those who have made significant contributions to the development and promotion of fire safety codes at the national, state, and local levels; he was also recognized by the National Association of State Fire Marshals in 2017 with the Olin Greene Outstanding Fire Prevention Service Award in honor of his career dedicated to fire prevention and public safety; and

WHEREAS, Gary West served in various other roles throughout his years of public service, including as a Fire Management Consultant at the University of Tennessee's Municipal Technical Advisory Service; his previous experience also includes serving as Fire Chief and EMS Director for the City of Gatlinburg, Fire Commander/Fire Marshal for the City of Maryville, and a Deputy Sheriff/Criminal Investigator; and

WHEREAS, in addition to receiving his bachelor's degree in organizational management from Tusculum College and his master's degree in business administration from Lincoln Memorial University, Mr. West holds certifications in the subject areas of fire investigations, law enforcement, zoning, codes and building inspection, and emergency medical services; and

WHEREAS, throughout his many successes, he has been blessed with the love of his wife, Susie, and their children and grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Gary West currently serves as a volunteer firefighter with the Ashland City Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, Mr. West exemplifies the spirit and allegiance to family and community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable career, Gary West has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the sincere respect of all those familiar with his work; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we extend to Gary L. West our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement and every continued success in 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.