

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 994

By Armstrong

A RESOLUTION to recognize Randall E. Nichols on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor those public officials who have performed with uncommon devotion and given valuable service to the citizens who elected them throughout their careers in public service; and

WHEREAS, Randall E. "Randy" Nichols has served with distinction for twenty-two years as District Attorney General for the 6th Judicial District of the State of Tennessee, which is comprised of the County of Knox; and

WHEREAS, General Nichols will be taking a much deserved retirement in August 2014; and

WHEREAS, Randy Nichols hails from Savannah, Tennessee, earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville in 1970 and his law degree from the University of Tennessee College of Law, and was admitted to the Tennessee Bar in 1973; and

WHEREAS, General Nichols spent four years as an assistant district attorney, moved into private practice in criminal defense for a period of ten years, was then appointed by Governor Ned McWherter to be the Judge in the Criminal Court, Division I, of Knox County, and was then elected to the bench in his own right, serving from June 1988 until August 1992; and

WHEREAS, he is the longest-serving district attorney general in the history of Knox County; he has overseen countless criminal prosecutions and personally prosecuted some of the most complex and dangerous cases in Knoxville's history; and

WHEREAS, General Nichols enforced a tough stance on serious crime and successfully implemented policies that resulted in swift and fair justice, earning him a reputation in this judicial district and beyond as a tough-minded and effective prosecutor; and

WHEREAS, he considers his biggest accomplishment during his tenure to be the high quality of the thirty-eight lawyers and forty-nine legal support professionals he assembled to assure fairness and justice for his constituents; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his primary responsibility of criminal prosecution, General Nichols considers it part of a prosecutor's duty to take a leadership role in preventing crime, which belief is reflected in his successful efforts in reducing school truancy in Knoxville; working in collaboration with the faith-based Compassion Coalition to positively impact the character development of at-risk youth; promoting the award-winning "Meth is Death" program in Knox County Schools; creating one of the first joint Child Abuse/Internet Crimes Against Children Units in the State and increasing prosecution staffing for child abuse cases while building close cooperation with law enforcement and the Department of Children's Services; providing the critical support to build the Family Justice Center, a state and national model, for supporting victims of family violence; and assigning full-time prosecutors to Knox County Juvenile Court for the first time; and

WHEREAS, other important acts of service to the public that General Nichols has performed include his service on the Tennessee Judicial Selection Commission, the Jury Reform Committee for the Tennessee Bar Association (TBA), the Tennessee Supreme Court's Gender/Fairness Committee, Knox County Schools Safety Committee, the TBA Bench and Bar Committee, the Public Safety Coalition, and the Tennessee Second Look Commission; he has also served multiple times on the Tennessee District Attorneys General Conference (TDAGC) Executive Committee, is a past president thereof, and is a frequent representative of the organization before the Tennessee General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, General Nichols is an honorable and admirable public servant, and he is no stranger to accolades for his accomplishments. He was named Metropolitan Drug Commission Community Champion in 2006, is a Fellow of the Knoxville Bar Foundation, and received the Coalition Against Family Violence Community Service Award, the Governors' Award of the Knoxville Bar Association, and the Pat McCutcheon Award, the highest honor bestowed by his fellow Tennessee district attorneys for exemplifying the highest standards of prosecution; and

WHEREAS, he is a devout man who has relied heavily on the strength of his faith to navigate the morally and legally complex issues prosecutors deal with daily. He is an active member of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension and has served in several lay offices at the church and with the East Tennessee Episcopal Diocese; and

WHEREAS, Randy Nichols exemplifies the spirit and allegiance to family and community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean, and he is most appreciative of the love and companionship of his wife, Laura; their two children, Ross and LeeAnne; son-in-law, Chad; grandson, Carter; and granddaughter, Braylee Grace; and

WHEREAS, Randy Nichol's professional career has shown the way for those who will follow him, and his service to the citizens of Knox County has been of the highest caliber; throughout his estimable career, he has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the unbounded respect and admiration of his colleagues and a grateful public; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this legislative body pause to reflect on the outstanding service to the criminal justice system and the community prevention initiatives that Randall E. Nichols has given to Tennessee, especially at this time on the cusp of his retirement from public office; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby recognize Randall E. Nichols, District Attorney General of the 6th Judicial District of the State of Tennessee, on the occasion of his retirement and express our sincere appreciation to him for his service to justice and public safety in Tennessee. We wish him success in his every future endeavor.

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