

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 999

By Love

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Nathaniel Harris of Nashville.

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

WHEREAS, Nathaniel Harris was an exemplary community leader and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, a highly successful businessman, Nathaniel Harris was the founder and owner of Woodcuts Gallery and Framing, an art gallery and frame shop that changed the course of economic development on Jefferson Street in Nashville and which recently celebrated its thirty-fifth year of operation; and

WHEREAS, a native of historic North Nashville, Nate Harris developed a love for woodworking as a child and inherited his love for entrepreneurship from his father, who passed away when Mr. Harris was eight years of age; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from Tennessee State University, Mr. Harris began a career in engineering, but he still gravitated toward woodworking; he began crafting picture frames and made cabinets for Genesco's Jarman shoe stores after hours; and

WHEREAS, his wife, Brenda, began sharing her framed cross-stitch artwork with her coworkers, and requests for framing poured in; as word spread, Mr. Harris's garage-based woodworking shop took over his house, and, at the suggestion of his wife, he sought a retail location to expand his business; and

WHEREAS, his diamond in the rough was the vacant, dilapidated building at 1613 Jefferson Street, which, having previously served as a place to purchase delicious hamburgers, had become riddled with hypodermic needles and trash, having been reduced to a refuge for drug addicts; and

WHEREAS, Nathaniel Harris, nevertheless, had a vision to create a business in the heart of the neighborhood he loved; he put his construction background and experience as a draftsman to use and, with the help of his wife, daughter, and other family members, worked nights and weekends to ready the building for business; and

WHEREAS, after many nights of hard labor and several financial investments, Mr. Harris opened Woodcuts Gallery and Framing to the public on September 23, 1987; he used his own workspace as an example of what can be done with old, vacant buildings in disrepair; and

WHEREAS, over the years, Nate Harris and his gallery received recognition locally from Jefferson United Merchants Partnership (J.U.M.P.), which Mr. Harris served as the first president, the NAACP, and the Greater Nashville Black Chamber of Commerce. The gallery also received national recognition from *Décor* and *Upscale* magazines; and

WHEREAS, Nathaniel Harris 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 the members of this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional gentleman 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 Nathaniel Harris, 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. Harris.

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.