

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1385

By Gant

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor Buddy Clark Leach II of Huntingdon.

WHEREAS, it is most fitting that the members of this General Assembly should acknowledge and applaud those community leaders who are wholly devoted to enhancing the quality of life for their fellow citizens and improving and enriching the place they all call home; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy person is Buddy Clark Leach II, who has distinguished himself as a citizen of the greatest dedication, ability, and integrity; and

WHEREAS, the son of Buddy Leach, Sr., and Shelby Leach, Buddy Leach was born on July, 5, 1956, at Eglin Air Force base in Florida; and

WHEREAS, after Buddy Leach, Sr.'s, service in the U.S. Air Force concluded, the family moved back home to Huntingdon, where Buddy Leach grew up and met his future wife, Paula Eskew Leach; and

WHEREAS, as a boy, Mr. Leach tagged along with his father, who was in the process of receiving his pilot's license, and this early introduction to aviation inspired his own passion for flying; and

WHEREAS, Buddy Leach was completely set on an aviation career as a high school student and applied to only one college, the U.S. Air Force Academy, to which he was accepted at the age of seventeen; and

WHEREAS, after graduating in 1978 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mathematics, Mr. Leach was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force; he completed undergraduate pilot training in 1979; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Leach served as a flight instructor for the next four years and trained a multitude of students, including exchange students from Saudi Arabia; he later flew C130s for two years before transferring to South Korea for a command and control position in a non-flying capacity; and

WHEREAS, after becoming acquainted with a U2 detachment while serving in South Korea, Buddy Leach applied for the special duty assignment of flying the U2 reconnaissance plane; after a rigorous interview process, which included flying the plane with an instructor, he was selected for the program in 1986; and

WHEREAS, on January 16, 1987, Mr. Leach became the 484<sup>th</sup> person out of approximately 1,100 to ever fly the U2 reconnaissance plane; and

WHEREAS, Buddy Leach retired from the Air Force in 1990 and was soon hired by FedEx in Memphis, where he served with distinction as a pilot for twenty-six years before taking a well-earned retirement in 2016; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Leach served honorably as a member of the U.S. Air Force Reserve from 1992 to 2003 and retired at the rank of lieutenant colonel; he also earned a master's degree in aviation management from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University during his illustrious aviation career; and

WHEREAS, following in his father's footsteps, Buddy Leach entered into Freemasonry in Huntingdon in 1998 and became a Master of Huntingdon Lodge #106 in 2009; and

WHEREAS, in his Masonic career, he has helped make thousands of good men better through continued friendship, brotherly love, and service to his community and this State; Mr. Leach has held many different titles in Freemasonry, including Grand Lecturer, Past Masters Association President, Excellent High Priest, Grand Principal Sojourner, Illustrious Master, Grand Conductor, Eminent Commander, and several others; and

WHEREAS, Buddy Leach is a member of the York Rite, Scottish Rite, Order of the Eastern Star, Tall Cedars, and Al Chymia Shrine; and

WHEREAS, on March 25, 2021, Mr. Leach was nominated and elected as Junior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of Tennessee, in which capacity he traveled throughout Tennessee and other states, visiting every Masonic District and advancing each year; and

WHEREAS, in a testament to the high esteem in which he is held by his peers, Buddy Leach was elected as Most Worshipful Grand Master on March 27, 2024, during the annual session of the Grand Lodge of Tennessee Free and Accepted Masons; and

WHEREAS, his many accomplishments aside, Mr. Leach is most appreciative of the love, companionship, and support he shares with his wife; they are the proud parents of two children, Jennifer Lee and Buddy Leach III; and

WHEREAS, Buddy Leach epitomizes the spirit and commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly find it appropriate to acknowledge and applaud Mr. Leach for his dedication to the State of Tennessee and its citizens; 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 commend Buddy Clark Leach II for his innumerable contributions to the citizens of this State and extend to him our best wishes for continued success in all 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 and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.

