

HOUSE RESOLUTION 20

By Jernigan

A RESOLUTION to honor Charles L. Johnston on the celebration of his eightieth birthday.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this legislative body pay tribute to those citizens who are celebrating special occasions in their estimable lives; and

WHEREAS, Charles L. Johnston celebrates his eightieth birthday on March 17, 2023, a milestone commemorated as yet another precious souvenir of life's rich pageant; and

WHEREAS, born on March 17, 1943, Mr. Johnston spent his early years in Nashville, with brief stints in Natchitoches, Louisiana, and Atlanta, Georgia; from the fourth grade through high school, he attended Castle Heights Military Academy in Lebanon; and

WHEREAS, Charles Johnston was destined to fly airplanes; his mother was one of the first licensed women pilots in Tennessee and was invited by Amelia Earhart to join The 99s women pilots group, and his father and uncle flew bombers in World War II; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Johnston learned to fly at Lebanon Municipal Airport, and shortly after graduating from high school, he enlisted in the United States Air Force; after basic training and advanced training as an X-ray technician, he was assigned to Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Alabama; and

WHEREAS, while working at Maxwell Air Force Base, he attended night school and then was sent by the Air Force to attend Arizona State University, from which he graduated with a degree in electrical engineering; he was subsequently accepted into flight training and began working toward his dream of becoming a fighter pilot; and

WHEREAS, after basic flight training and advanced training in fighters, Mr. Johnston advanced through a host of fighter aircraft, with occasional forays into different, sometimes exotic aircraft; he trained in foreign combat tactics, primarily Russian and Chinese, and then

provided training for the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy, and U.S. Marine Corps fighter squadrons. When not training fighter pilots, he took a tour training Taiwanese fighter pilots in air combat tactics; and

WHEREAS, Charles Johnston retired at the rank of Major, and for his military service, he was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal, eleven Air Medals, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal with four campaign stars, and the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross; he was also awarded Senior Pilot Wings by the U.S. Air Force; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Johnston continued flying in his years after military service in a variety of capacities; when hired by United Airlines to do simulator training for flight crew, he offered training in recovery from an inverted position; this training, which had not been offered to United aircrew prior to that time, thus became standard training for the airline. He flew with United Airlines until updated FAA regulations forced him into retirement; and

WHEREAS, he continued flying and instructing, becoming a freelance trainer in California for a time and serving as an FAA-certified flight instrument instructor; currently, he greatly enjoys flying his Cessna 172, taking an at-risk group of young people for rides through a program sponsored by the Young Eagles organization through the Experimental Aircraft Association, as well as flying his family around; and

WHEREAS, in his free time, he contributes to various veteran support groups, helps feed the homeless in downtown Nashville, and attends Downtown Presbyterian Church in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Johnston is most grateful for the love of his daughters, Kelly, Kim, Joann, and Lisa; stepdaughter, Leslie; stepson, Brian; and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, as Charles Johnston enters his ninth decade, he continues to lead an active life in service to others and is greatly admired for his wisdom, guidance, and generosity; and

WHEREAS, we wish to grasp this golden opportunity to specially recognize one of Tennessee's most outstanding citizens on this very special occasion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we hereby honor Charles L. Johnston on the celebration of his eightieth birthday and extend to him our best wishes for many happy returns of the day.

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