

HOUSE RESOLUTION 179

By Butt

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor Weatherford/Poag Farm on being named Maury Alliance Century Farm of the Year.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should salute that most noble agricultural institution, the family farm, which serves as a cornerstone for our rural communities while providing food and fiber for Tennessee and beyond; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy family farm is the Weatherford/Poag Farm in the Culleoka community of Maury County, which is still owned by members of the Weatherford and Poag families today and has been honored as the Maury Alliance Century Farm of the Year; and

WHEREAS, the Century Farm Program was established to recognize the dedication and contributions of those families who have retained ownership of the same farm for more than a century, persevering through succeeding generations and coping with wars, floods, droughts, economic crises, and other obstacles presented by way of natural and human intervention; and

WHEREAS, the genesis of the Weatherford/Poag Farm can be traced to Willis Riley Weatherford (1862-1938); Willis Riley Weatherford was a Civil War orphan who was raised by his grandmother, Nancy Kerbey Weatherford, the widow of Mastin Weatherford (1798-1857); and

WHEREAS, Willis' father, William Branson Weatherford, (Confederate States of America Army, 9th Battalion, Co. B) died on August 6, 1864, from injuries sustained a few days following the Battle of Brown's Mill, near Newnan, Georgia; William Branson's wife and Willis' mother, Lucy Thurman Weatherford, died just a few days later of unknown causes; and

WHEREAS, other members of the Weatherford family were also loyal supporters of the Confederacy during the War Between the States; William Branson's brother, Jesse, drowned in Louisiana while serving the Confederacy, and a third brother also served the Confederate States of America; and

WHEREAS, Willis' great-grandfather, William Weatherford (1753-1819), was a Virginia planter and Revolutionary War veteran who served four years and six months in the Continental Army; he was married to Mary Robertson, and the couple had eleven children, including Mastin, Willis' grandfather; and

WHEREAS, Willis Weatherford lived with his grandmother until at least 1870, but at some subsequent time, he founded the family farm that still bears his name; and

WHEREAS, the Weatherford/Poag Farm lies on both sides of Moore Lane and is bordered by Hopewell Road in the Culleoka community; a bridge on Hopewell Road is named in honor of Bailey Weatherford, Willis' son; and

WHEREAS, Bailey Weatherford and his wife, Lois, eventually acquired the farm from his father and lived there for many years; and

WHEREAS, Joe Poag and his late wife, Peggy Ruth Weatherford Poag, and their sons, Jim and Mark, acquired the Bailey and Lois Weatherford Farm after Bailey passed away in 1994; Lois had preceded her husband in death in 1993; and

WHEREAS, the late Peggy Ruth Weatherford was the daughter of the late Cleveland Weatherford, who served as Columbia's postmaster for many years, and Dessie Ozburn Weatherford and the niece of Bailey Weatherford; and

WHEREAS, today, the Poag family raises Angus beef cattle on the farm, which is managed by Joe and Peggy Ruth's son, Jim Poag, who lives in the original home on the south side of Moore Lane with his wife, Michelle; a second home was built on the north side for Joe and Peggy Ruth and their son and daughter-in-law, Mark and Carrie Poag, and their family; and

WHEREAS, Willis Riley Weatherford's legacy lives on today, as there are, in addition to the Weatherford Poag Farm, at least five Maury County farms owned or occupied by his

grandchildren or great-grandchildren, including the late Gerald and Mrs. Robbie Weatherford Farm, the Richard Callahan, Brenda Callahan, and Bonnie and Jim Van Bibber Farm, the Jerry Weatherford Farm, the Bill and Jean Marie Hull Farm, and the Gary and Ann Weatherford Farm; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to acknowledge and applaud the members of the Weatherford and Poag families for their dedication to agriculture, recognizing the importance of the family farm to our rural communities and the State of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we hereby recognize and honor Joe, Jim, Michelle, Mark, and Carrie Poag, and the other members of the Weatherford and Poag families upon Weatherford/Poag Farm being honored as Maury Alliance Century Farm of the Year in recognition of its contributions to agriculture and Tennessee's history and heritage, and we extend to these fine citizens our best wishes for every future success.

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