

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 9

By Henry

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Judson Collins of Nashville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Judson Grant "Jud" Collins; and

WHEREAS, widely known as "Mr. Television," Jud Collins was a pioneering Nashville radio and television personality, talk show host, and highly respected news anchor who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, a native of Birmingham, Alabama, Jud Collins was born on November 17, 1919; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Collins launched his broadcasting career in 1940 as an announcer on the Nashville radio station WSM, covering news, gathering sound, and occasionally working on the *Grand Ole Opry*; and

WHEREAS, gallantly serving his country during World War II, he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant and served as a twin-engine aircraft pilot, flying more than 1,500 hours as a first pilot in the United States Army Air Force; and

WHEREAS, in 1950, Jud Collins became Nashville's first television news anchor, and for the next twenty years served as principle anchor for all news programs on WSM-TV; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Collins served as political commentator and anchor for WSM-TV election returns telecasts from 1950 to 1970; originated and hosted Nashville's first variety TV program, the *Noon Show*, which won the radio Television Council Award for ten consecutive years; and was appointed as the News Director for WSM Radio and Television in 1964; and

WHEREAS, over the course of his career, Jud Collins interviewed countless high profile personalities and influential leaders, from Eleanor Roosevelt and Robert Kennedy to Hank Williams; and

WHEREAS, during a riot at the Tennessee State Prison in 1960, Mr. Collins went inside, becoming the first in Nashville to broadcast the kind of live, breaking news that has since become a staple of local television news; and

WHEREAS, when President John F. Kennedy was shot on the afternoon of November 22, 1963, Jud Collins talked viewers through the unfolding tragedy during his afternoon talk show; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Collins was on the air until 1970, when he took a position as the Vice President of public affairs with WSM, a post from which he retired in 1977; and

WHEREAS, a devoted family man, Jud Collins maintained a distinct line between work and home life; when pressured by friends to enter politics he asked his family first, and when his wife, Mattie Lou, said she did not want to raise their children in New York, Mr. Collins turned down a job on a program now known as *NBC Nightly News*; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Collins also served with great acumen as a member of the Board of Directors for Fidelity Federal of Tennessee (Regions Bank) and as a member of the Executive Committee and the Advertising Committee; other business involvements included two years as a news anchor for Channel 2 and, from 1981-1985, he was employed as Market Director for a Real Estate Development firm in Orlando, Florida; and

WHEREAS, despite the many demands placed upon his time, Jud Collins also contributed his remarkable talents to his community as a member of numerous civic organizations, including the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce; the Aviation Committee; Metropolitan Industrial Development Board, serving as its chairman from 1975-1978; and the Heart Association, for which he served as Middle Tennessee chairman; and

WHEREAS, he additionally served as an executive committee member and public relations chairman of the United Way, a member of the Board of Governors for Aquinas Junior College, tournament director of the Music City Pro-Celebrity Golf Tournament, member and former president of Richland Country Club, vice president of Nashville City Club, member of the Board of Directors of the Radio and Television News Directors Association, and member of Sigma Delta Chi; and

WHEREAS, a devoted leader in his church, Mr. Collins served the Belle Meade United Methodist Church as a member and teacher of the Adult Sunday School Class and as Lay Speaker; and

WHEREAS, Judson Collins enjoyed the loving companionship of his wife of sixty-six years, Mattie Lou Moore, who preceded him in death on November 2, 2008; and

WHEREAS, he is survived by his adoring children Linda Guthrie, Kay McGivaren, Grant Collins, Jr., and Susan Palladino; grandchildren Katie Lou Warner, Judson McGivaren, Kerrie Gill, Jenny McGivaren, Erin Centanni, Judson Collins III, Nicholas Palladino III, and Rachel Lou Palladino; great-grandchildren Kaylee and Houston McGivaren, Carter Centanni, Ella Lou and Jack Warner; brother Howard Earl Collins and sister-in-law Jean Beckwith; as well as numerous nieces and nephews; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Collins 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 this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional broadcast news professional, public servant, and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Judson Collins, 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. Collins.

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