

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 18

By Henry

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Wallace Niels Rasmussen of Nashville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Wallace Niels Rasmussen; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rasmussen was a prominent philanthropist and distinguished businessman who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, the son of a Danish immigrant, Mr. Rasmussen was raised on a dairy farm in rural Nebraska, beginning his career at the age of nineteen with the Beatrice Creamery Company in Lincoln, Nebraska. His eagerness to learn and strong work ethic enabled him to ascend quickly up the corporate ranks, becoming the Chief Executive Officer of Beatrice Foods Company in 1976, in which capacity he led the largest food processing company in the nation; and

WHEREAS, upon retirement from Beatrice Foods Company, Mr. Rasmussen honorably served on the boards of Commerce Union Bank, Shoney's, Clayton Manufactured Homes, and Dollar General; he was appointed chairman of the Tennessee Board of Corrections Commission by Governor Lamar Alexander, serving three years with the highest integrity; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rasmussen was a most estimable gentleman, whose philanthropy and generosity knew no bounds; a student of life and personal experience who valued education highly, Mr. Rasmussen made a lifetime commitment to helping others achieve their education; and

WHEREAS, he used his leadership and resources to establish The Rasmussen Foundation, which provided funding for annual scholarships to Belmont University and Vanderbilt Medical School. He established the Rasmussen Foreign Student Exchange Program

at Belmont University and North Central College in Naperville, Illinois, giving hundreds of students the opportunity to study abroad in Europe and Russia; and

WHEREAS, this extremely praiseworthy gentleman was honored with a number of meritorious awards; most noteworthy are the Horatio Alger Award for Distinguished Americans, the Golden Plate Award from the American Academy of Achievement, Tennessee Citizen of the Year in 1979, and most recently in 2006, the New Horizon Award, presented annually by the Tennessee Foreign Language Institute; and

WHEREAS, recognized as an astute businessman, Mr. Rasmussen co-authored a book, *Mutual Distrust Between Business and the News Media*, for a study sponsored by the First Amendment Center at Vanderbilt University; and

WHEREAS, he was a lifetime member of Lodge Number One, Vincennes, Indiana, Masonic Order, who always brought honor to the name of this most esteemed organization; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rasmussen was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rasmussen enjoyed the loving companionship of his late wife, Grace Irene Rasmussen; and

WHEREAS, he was the proud and loving father and father-in-law of Ada and Johannes Almering, and Walter and Nijole Rasmussen; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rasmussen will be sorely missed by his grandchildren, Dawn Martin, Amy Hicks, Alice Schwarz, Lukas Rasmussen, Erika Rasmussen, John Almering, and Madeleine Aluri; and

WHEREAS, having eight great-grandchildren, Mr. Rasmussen's honorable legacy will be remembered and continued for many years to come; and

WHEREAS, he will be deeply missed by his devoted caretaker, Sheila Bryan; and a host of friends and loved ones; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Rasmussen 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 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 Wallace Niels Rasmussen, 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. Rasmussen.

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