

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 66

By Massey

A RESOLUTION to commend Many-Bears Grinder for honorable and astute service to the people of Tennessee as commissioner of the Department of Veterans Services.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly pay tribute to those estimable public servants who have dedicated themselves to improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, Many-Bears Grinder has served as commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Veterans Services (TDVS) for eight years; she will soon leave this position, bringing to a close an exemplary tenure of devoted, capable service to the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Many-Bears Grinder was appointed to head the Department of Veterans Services by Governor Bill Haslam in January 2011, and since that time, she has guided the department with intellect, drive, commitment, and an affinity for the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, a native of Salt Lake City, Utah, Commissioner Many-Bears Grinder received her master's degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College and her master's degree in human resource development from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville; she was awarded an honorary doctorate in public service from Maryville College in 2016; and

WHEREAS, a proud military veteran, she honorably served this country as a member of the Tennessee Army National Guard for more than thirty-five years and retired at the rank of Colonel to become commissioner; she is an Operation Enduring Freedom combat veteran, and she served in Afghanistan as the Head of Secretariat for the International Police Coordination Board; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to honors and awards, Commissioner Grinder is the recipient of the Legion of Merit and the Bronze Star Medal, and she was inducted into the Fort Benning Hall of Fame in 2004; and

WHEREAS, the first woman to serve in this capacity, Commissioner Grinder has dedicated herself to the operation of TDVS field offices, the four state veteran cemeteries, and the Appeals Division; she is also an ex-officio voting member of the Tennessee State Veterans Home Board; and

WHEREAS, under Commissioner Grinder's leadership, the department has focused on "Everything Veteran," improving customer service to all Tennessee veterans, supporting Justice Involved Veterans in Veteran Treatment Courts, and making strides to increase higher education access for student veterans; and

WHEREAS, a respected and trusted leader, Commissioner Many-Bears Grinder is chair of the Governor's Veterans Education Task Force, and she was appointed by the Chief of Staff, Army to serve on the Retired Soldier's Council until 2022; she also serves on the Governor's Subcabinet for Workforce Development, the Tennessee State Museum Foundation Board, the Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology Nashville General Advisory Committee, the Great War Commission, the Fort Campbell Retiree Council, and the Nashville Serving Veterans Community Board; and

WHEREAS, her many accomplishments aside, Commissioner Grinder is fortunate to share both love and companionship with her husband, Ernie Grinder, a Vietnam veteran; and

WHEREAS, Commissioner Many-Bears Grinder is wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the Volunteer State, and she should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we commend Many-Bears Grinder for her honorable and astute service to the good people of Tennessee as commissioner of the Department of Veterans Services and wish her all the best in her 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.