

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 75

By Henry

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Mr. C. Ray Bell of Nashville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Mr. C. Ray Bell of Nashville; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bell was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, instrumental in the development and growth of Tennessee into the vibrant, developing state it is today, C. Ray Bell was a distinguished civic leader, visionary contractor and builder, and esteemed businessman; and

WHEREAS, the founder of Ray Bell Construction in 1969, Ray Bell utilized his business acumen to transform the company into Bell & Associates Construction L.P., one of the most prominent builder's in Tennessee that has completed over \$5 billion in construction projects during its forty-year history; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bell was also one of Nashville's most active builders, leaving behind a string of landmarks his company constructed both in the public and private sector, including the Tennessee Performing Arts Center, the Shelby Street and Gateway Bridges, the Justice Adolphus A. Birch Building, and the BellSouth Tower; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the numerous highway projects across Tennessee constructed by Ray Bell's companies, their contracted work for the State of Tennessee included the construction of the Thompson-Boling Arena on the University of Tennessee campus in Knoxville, among a number of esteemed public buildings; and

WHEREAS, born in Scottsboro, Alabama, on March 28, 1941, C. Ray Bell was the son of William Preston and Pearl Bell; raised in Shelbyville, Tennessee, he graduated from the University of the South in Sewanee with a degree in English in 1963; and

WHEREAS, following in his father's footsteps, he entered the construction industry after his college graduation and worked for a company in Shelbyville for six years before establishing Ray Bell Construction in 1969; and

WHEREAS, over the next forty years, Ray Bell Construction evolved into Bell & Associates Construction in 1997, and Mr. Bell was joined by his sons, Brad and Darek, as partners, continuing the family legacy in the construction industry; and

WHEREAS, undoubtedly the most prominent contractor in Tennessee history over the last half-century, Ray Bell was a founding member of the esteemed Tennessee Chapter of the Associated Builders and Contractors; and

WHEREAS, a generous philanthropist and community leader, Ray Bell freely gave his time and financial support to numerous charities and organizations, such as the Arthritis Foundation, which specially recognized him for his contribution of more than one million dollars, and the Hermitage Foundation, the Tennessee State Museum, the Tennessee Business Roundtable, and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Commission; and

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

WHEREAS, he is survived by his two sons and their wives, Brad and Marilyn Bell and Darek and Amy Bell; his three grandsons, Eli Bell, Deuce Bell, and Cohen Bell; his brother and sister-in-law, Billy and Francis Bell; his sister, Bonnie Bell; his niece, Rita Bell Murrah; and his nephew, Tony Bell, as well as a host of devoted friends; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bell 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 SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of C. Ray Bell, 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. C. Ray Bell.

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