

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 138

By Burchett

A RESOLUTION to recognize the sixtieth anniversary of the Municipal Technical Advisory Service and to honor those who have been instrumental in its six decades of service to the municipalities of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those public entities which have served the citizens of the State with the utmost in professionalism and a keen interest in improving the lives of all Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, the Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) is one such estimable organization; on April 15, 2009, it will have served the State's city governments for sixty years by providing the very best in technical assistance on a wide range of issues affecting municipalities; and

WHEREAS, in 1949, the Tennessee Municipal League asked the Tennessee General Assembly to establish a public agency to provide technical assistance to municipalities. Six senators sponsored the original bill, Senate Bill 607, which Governor Gordon Browning signed into law on April 15, 1949, thus establishing the Municipal Technical Advisory Service at the University of Tennessee (UT); and

WHEREAS, according to the language of the original bill, the MTAS was established for "studies and research in municipal government, publications, educational conferences and attendance thereat and in furnishing technical, consultative and field services to municipalities in problems relating to fiscal administration, accounting, tax assessment and collection, law enforcement, improvements and public works, and in any and all matters relating to municipal government"; and

WHEREAS, in order to fund the MTAS and make its service equally available to all the State's municipalities, the General Assembly established an innovative funding structure: the University of Tennessee budget includes a line-item for the MTAS, and it also receives a small percentage of the municipalities' share of state sales tax revenues; and

WHEREAS, sixty years after the founding of the MTAS, Tennessee remains the only state government to proactively support a local government technical advisory service; thanks to the General Assembly's foresight and a creative appropriations mechanism, the MTAS can serve every one of the 347 incorporated municipalities in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, today, the MTAS is an agency within the UT Institute of Public Service, and it offers programs and services to cities in finance and accounting, human resources, information technology, legal assistance, library services, municipal management, ordinance codification, public safety, public utilities, public works, and training; and

WHEREAS, with offices in Knoxville, Johnson City, Nashville, Martin, and Jackson, the MTAS extends UT's outreach well beyond its academic campuses and Tennessee's metropolitan areas; nine municipal management consultants, as well as a number of specialists in a wide range of areas, serve cities in ten regions, a service structure that allows the MTAS to lend its assistance to so many municipalities across the State; and

WHEREAS, in fiscal year 2008, MTAS answered more than 9,100 requests for assistance and provided more than 41,000 training hours to nearly 11,000 participants; thanks to its prodigious efforts, the MTAS helped Tennessee municipalities realize nearly eighteen million dollars in favorable economic impact by reducing costs and increasing revenues; and

WHEREAS, after sixty years of continuous service, the MTAS remains focused on its mission to meet the challenges of providing timely, valuable information and assistance to Tennessee cities as their leaders and citizens work to build better communities; 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 hereby honor and recognize the dedicated staff of the Municipal Technical Advisory Service on the occasion of that agency's sixtieth anniversary, thank them for

all the assistance they have lent over the years to the municipalities of the State, and wish them much continued success in their 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.