

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 287

By Burchett

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Dr. John D. Petersen upon his accomplishments while serving as President of the University of Tennessee System.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly takes pride in honoring those esteemed individuals who have dedicated their professional careers and personal excellence to improving the quality of life for their fellow Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, Dr. John D. Petersen is one such noteworthy person who served as the twenty-third president of the University of Tennessee System with the greatest integrity and probity in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, born on November 21, 1947, in Los Angeles, California, Dr. Petersen was taught the value of education and service to others at an early age; and

WHEREAS, he was the first member of his immediate family to achieve a college education, graduating from California State University, Los Angeles, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry; and

WHEREAS, in furthering his education, he earned his doctoral degree in Inorganic Chemistry from the University of California, Santa Barbara; and

WHEREAS, during his distinguished career, he directed several research programs in Inorganic Chemistry funded by the Department of Energy, the National Science Foundation, the Research Corporation, and the Petroleum Research Fund and he was also honored as the Alexander von Humboldt research fellow and guest professor at Universitat Regensburg in Germany; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Petersen served with acumen and alacrity for six years as a reviewer for the National Research Council's postdoctoral placement program for chemistry doctoral recipients at national laboratories across the United States; called upon for his vast knowledge and expertise, he has reviewed over 200 scientific books, journal articles, and research proposals; and

WHEREAS, while teaching as a Professor of Chemistry at Clemson University for several years, Dr. Petersen also operated as the Head of the Chemistry Department and Associate Dean for Research in the College of Sciences, in which positions he earned the respect and admiration of his colleagues and students alike for the exemplary quality of his work; he is a member of the Thomas Green Clemson Academy of Engineers and Scientists at Clemson University; and

WHEREAS, in joining the faculty at Wayne State University, Dr. Petersen served as a Professor of Chemistry and Dean of the College of Science; his expert abilities and dedication were also called upon while serving as the Faculty Athletic Representative to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) for Wayne State University for six years; and

WHEREAS, called upon for his singular skills and exemplary character, Dr. Petersen acted as Chancellor and Provost for University Affairs at the University of Connecticut, while also serving on the faculty as a Professor of Chemistry; and

WHEREAS, chosen as the twenty-third President of the University of Tennessee System, Dr. Petersen performed admirably while guiding this State's esteemed higher education system; and

WHEREAS, he also served as a member of the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees and as a director and executive committee member of the Council for Chemical Research, establishing several statewide initiatives aimed at economic growth in Tennessee, strengthening relationships with state and federal government leaders key to critical support for the statewide university system, and overseeing increased graduation rates and record enrollment numbers at the member institutions of the University of Tennessee System; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Petersen, in his role as chair of the University of Tennessee-Battelle Board of Governors, reinvigorated the relationship between Oak Ridge National Laboratory and

the University of Tennessee, leading to phenomenal achievements, including an award from the National Science Foundation of \$65 million; and

WHEREAS, he led efforts to establish a statewide initiative focused on producing alternative fuels, creating jobs, and stimulating economic development in rural counties by the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture's Tennessee Biofuels Initiative; and

WHEREAS, through Genera Energy, LLC, Dr. Petersen facilitated the partnership between the University of Tennessee Research Foundation and DuPont Danisco, which constructed an innovative pilot-scale bio-refinery and a state-of-the-art research and development facility for cellulosic ethanol; and

WHEREAS, a University of Tennessee System team led by Dr. Petersen played an important and crucial role in Volkswagen's decision to build a United States production facility in Chattanooga; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Petersen encouraged and enabled the birth of an innovative campus in Knoxville, known as Cherokee Farm, that will engage the expertise of a growing collection of interdisciplinary resources to find solutions to national and global challenges; and

WHEREAS, he has supported the initiatives of the University of Tennessee's Institute for Public Service, which generated \$1 billion dollars in economic impact on the State during the 2008 fiscal year and helped create and retain nearly 20,000 jobs in communities across the state; and

WHEREAS, through Dr. Petersen's efforts, the University of Tennessee also launched a \$1 billion dollar fundraising campaign which is well ahead of projected schedules for established goals; and

WHEREAS, average ACT scores and high school grade point averages for entering freshman are the highest in the University of Tennessee's history and graduation rates have increased each year during Dr. Petersen's tenure as President; schools governed by the University of Tennessee System are experiencing record enrollment numbers, indicating that Tennessee's best and brightest high school students are attending college in-state; and

WHEREAS, the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK) was named one of the fifty best-value colleges in the country by the *Princeton Review*, and UTK was also named as one of the best-value public colleges in 2008 by *Kiplinger's*; and

WHEREAS, *US News and World Report* also included the University of Chattanooga (UTC) in its list of best-value colleges; and

WHEREAS, the University of Tennessee at Martin made the list of best-value colleges each year from 2006 through 2009 by International Research and Evaluation, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Petersen expertly and admirably guided the University of Tennessee System to a new level of excellence in academics, research, fundraising, and athletics during the last five years, leaving it in a prime position for much continued success in the years to come; 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 commend Dr. John D. Petersen for his stalwart service and dedication as President of the University of Tennessee System, thank him for his peerless public service to the citizens and students of Tennessee, and wish him much continued success in all his 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.