

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 606

By Gresham

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Deborah Denise Oakley,
Chief of Hardin County District 4 Fire
Department.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective freedom, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, thousands of Tennesseans continue this time-honored tradition of public service as firefighters, facing the rigors of corporeal imperilment in protecting those whom they so selflessly serve; and

WHEREAS, one such esteemed Tennessean is Deborah Denise Oakley, Chief of Hardin County District 4 Fire Department, a devoted public servant who has served as a volunteer firefighter for nearly two decades; and

WHEREAS, Chief Oakley has been a volunteer with the Hardin County Fire Department since 1998; she has served as Chief of District 4 for the last seven years, and in 2017, she was honored as Hardin County Fire Chief of the year; and

WHEREAS, as Chief, her duties include department fundraising, maintenance of equipment, personnel management, and personal visits to the people of the district; and

WHEREAS, around six years ago, Chief Deborah Oakley formed the Hardin County Fire Department Honor Guard; the honor guard consists of eight members and has performed at the 9-11 Memorial Ceremony in Bell Buckle and in Hardin and surrounding counties, as well as at various firefighter funerals and related ceremonies, including Local Emergency Planning Committee conferences and funerals for dignitaries; and

WHEREAS, in further service to the Hardin County Fire Department, Chief Oakley composed a song, titled "God's Volunteer," that has essentially become a hymn for her unit; it is sung to the tune of the West Point Alma Mater, and the lyrics are as follows:

Hail Hardin County Volunteers, serving from year to year
Filling our County's need, having no fear
Weather does not delay, cold, heat, or pleasant day
Proudly we always say, serving with pride

Trusting in God's desire, braving the wind or fire
Neighbors know all we do, all just for you
In Honor, we stand with pride, duty fulfilled in stride
Courage, none can deny, serving for you

I am a Volunteer, let me be ever near
And when my course is run, be thou at peace
Honor I've filled with pride, County e'er at my side
Loyal, remember me, serving for thee; and

WHEREAS, Chief Oakley was born in Chattanooga and graduated from Rhea County High School; she was baptized into the First Church of the Nazarene in Chattanooga and worked as a nurse technician at Chattanooga's Parkridge Hospital. She has been a resident of Hardin County since 1990; and

WHEREAS, throughout life's trials and triumphs, she has enjoyed the love of her husband of thirty-five years and their three sons, Matthew, Daniel, and Michael, and three granddaughters, Emma, Hallie, and Caroline; and

WHEREAS, continuing the family legacy of service above self, Matthew Oakley is a Captain of the Hardin County Fire Department; his wife, Amy, is a nurse and paramedic; and Michael Oakley was awarded the Carnegie Hero Award and honored by the State of Tennessee for saving the life of a young man in a vehicle engulfed in flames; and

WHEREAS, Chief Oakley is a citizen of whom the Volunteer State is most proud, and she should be recognized for her professionalism and compassion in the face of danger; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Chief Deborah Denise Oakley for her tireless

devotion to serving her fellow citizens as a volunteer firefighter with the Hardin County Fire Department, extending to her our best wishes for continued success in all 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.