

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 874

By Akbari

A RESOLUTION to recognize and commend the 2023 Do the Write Thing Challenge National Ambassadors, Zya Sails, Jesse Haynes, Angel Daniel, and Treasure Burchett.

WHEREAS, it is most fitting that the members of this General Assembly recognize those precocious youth who excel in the classroom and beyond and bring great pride to this State; and

WHEREAS, four such individuals are Zya Sails, Jesse Haynes, Angel Daniel, and Treasure Burchett, Western Grand Division middle school students who were selected as National Ambassadors for Do the Write Thing Recognition Week, which took place July 15-19, 2023, in Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, an initiative of the National Campaign to Stop Violence, the Do the Write Thing (DtWT) Challenge is a writing program for middle school students that positions them as community catalysts as they examine the root causes and effects of youth violence; and

WHEREAS, the DtWT Challenge gives students an opportunity to examine the impact of youth violence on their lives in classroom discussions and in written form by communicating what they think should be done to change the culture of violence; and

WHEREAS, since the program's inception, more than 2.5 million students have participated, with upward of 85,000 written submissions per year; the DtWT Challenge has been implemented in twenty-six participating communities across the nation, including Jackson/Madison County and Memphis/Shelby County, and a statewide program is being organized to include other Tennessee communities; and

WHEREAS, each year, educators encourage middle school students to answer three questions involving youth violence, including its causes, how youth violence has affected a

student's life, and ways in which a student might help reduce youth violence; after evaluation, the girl and boy who submit the most responsive writings from their community are selected to serve as DtWT Challenge National Ambassadors; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, Zya Sails from North Parkway Middle School, Jesse Haynes from Jackson Careers and Technology, Angel Daniel from Memphis Business Academy, and Treasure Burchett from Germantown Middle School ably represented the Volunteer State; Mr. Burchett wrote a superlative essay detailing how Memphis violence affects young Black men and was one of four students invited to read his essay during a presentation at the U.S. Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, while visiting our nation's capital, the National Ambassadors participated in an awards dinner at the Kuwait Ambassador's residence and toured the Library of Congress; a leather-bound volume of their writings was published and placed in the Library of Congress; and a culminating banquet for the students was held at the National Press Club; and

WHEREAS, Zya Sails, Jesse Haynes, Angel Daniel, and Treasure Burchett are some of the most exceptional youth in our State, and their compassionate commitment to discourse around violence and its effects on young people is most worthy of our commendation; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we recognize and commend Zya Sails, Jesse Haynes, Angel Daniel, and Treasure Burchett, National Ambassadors who represented Tennessee during the 2023 Do the Write Thing Challenge, extending our best wishes for their continued success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to

the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.