

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1153

By Burks

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Donna Castle of  
Cookeville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Donna Castle; and

WHEREAS, Donna Castle was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for her fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Castle served with acumen and alacrity as the Director of Programming and Promotions for WCTE-TV, in which position she earned the respect of her peers for the exemplary quality of her work; and

WHEREAS, a native of New Hampshire, Donna Castle graduated with honors from the University of New Hampshire with a degree in English and Journalism; she began her professional career as the City Editor of the *New Hampshire Daily Eagle* in Claremont, New Hampshire; and

WHEREAS, a few years later, she became the first female news director in New Hampshire after taking the position at WSLV Radio in Claremont; she then began working for the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) in 1969; and

WHEREAS, Donna Castle arrived in Cookeville with sons Russ, Art, and Roger in late 1980 after her husband, Richard Castle, was named General Manager of WCTE-TV, the public television station for the Upper Cumberland; and

WHEREAS, volunteering her services to the station for over a decade, Mrs. Castle first contributed her talents as an announcer; she became the voice of station break announcements and audio bridges in programs, and projected the "on-air" station image. For many years, she was the main graphic operator on the station's coverage of local sporting events; and

WHEREAS, utilizing her experience as a reporter in New Hampshire, Mrs. Castle performed at the highest level with WCTE's coverage of area legislators on the station's *Legislative Viewpoint* program, gaining the respect and admiration of both the late Senator Anna Belle Clement O'Brien and the late Senator Tommy Burks, who strongly supported the station; and

WHEREAS, for twenty-five years, Donna Castle's duties included putting together the station's programming line up and guide; she also produced, hosted, and edited many programs of WCTE, which were often distributed far beyond the broadcast signal of the WCTE transmitter; and

WHEREAS, after officially joining the staff of WCTE in 1986 as its Program Director, Donna Castle and her husband Richard were the heart and soul of the station, working for years with inadequate funding and meager wages, performing every job at the station, and utilizing their entire family to nurture and build what has now become one of the most valuable assets the Upper Cumberland has to offer; and

WHEREAS, Donna and Richard Castle dedicated their lives to WCTE; because they refused to give up when times were tough, their hard work and tireless efforts now benefit the daily lives of all who live and work throughout the Upper Cumberland region; and

WHEREAS, former Tennessee Technological University President Dr. Angelo Volpe said: "Dick and Donna Castle are truly pioneers of public television in Tennessee. Their dedication to WCTE and their efforts have led to the quality programming which we all enjoy today...Dick and Donna (were) instrumental in forging the bond between our university and WCTE"; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Castle was also deeply devoted to her family, and she always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, She enjoyed the loving companionship of her beloved husband, Richard, and was the proud mother of three devoted sons, Russ, Art, and Roger; and

WHEREAS, Donna Castle leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her 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 SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Donna Castle, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character and her 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 Mrs. Castle.

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