

SENATE RESOLUTION 38

By Norris

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Mildred Owen Wortham of Tipton County.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Mildred Owen Wortham of Tipton County; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Wortham, affectionately known to friends and family as “Ms. Mildred,” was an exceptional scholar, teacher, author, and esteemed historian who worked assiduously to improve the quality of education for the children in her community; and

WHEREAS, Mildred Owen Wortham was born in Tipton County on October 13, 1918, the tenth and youngest child of the late R.L. and Effie Owen; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Wortham was joined in holy matrimony to the love of her life, Mr. Clarice L. “Judd” Wortham, whose loving companionship she enjoyed for twenty-seven years before his passing in 1967; and

WHEREAS, she was an active and devout member of Oak Grove Baptist Church for eighty years, which she served faithfully by teaching primary, beginners, youth, and adult development classes; working with the choir and senior citizens group; serving as the Director of the Women’s Missionary Union for eight years and volunteering for mission trips; and

WHEREAS, standing as the church historian, Mrs. Wortham compiled and revised a church history for the church’s 2003 Homecoming; just before her passing, she was working to compile an updated pictorial church history of Oak Grove; and

WHEREAS, deeply devoted to academia, Mildred Wortham was an elementary school teacher for thirty years, beginning her career at Garland School, later teaching at Owen School, and then Holmes Elementary, where she continued to teach until her retirement; and

WHEREAS, a woman with an innate capacity for loving children, Mrs. Wortham was elected as a 1972 Outstanding Elementary Teacher of America; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Wortham also devoted her time and many talents to a variety of educational organizations; and

WHEREAS, she was an esteemed member of the National Education Association, the Tennessee Education Association, the West Tennessee Education Association, the Tipton County Education Association, and the Tipton County Retired Teachers' Association; and

WHEREAS, she held several leadership positions as well, serving as President of the local Alpha Delta Kappa International Teachers' sorority for three years, as Vice-President for one year, and as Chaplain for two years; and

WHEREAS, always supportive of her community and a strong advocate for history and heritage, Mildred Wortham was commissioned by the First State Bank to compile and write a pictorial history of Tipton County in 1993; for this project, she collected hundreds of historical photographs and conducted countless interviews, so as to include every community in her book; and

WHEREAS, her first published work, *Tipton County, Tennessee: A Place of Memories – A People Moving Forward*, earned much local acclaim and became a local history favorite; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Wortham's community involvement extended beyond her research and writing for her book; she was also an active member of the Town and Country Garden Club, which she served as President, Recording Secretary, and Chaplain; and

WHEREAS, a highly valued member of the Tipton County Historical Society, she worked tirelessly to record and preserve local history; and

WHEREAS, in 1992, Mildred Wortham published her second book, *The Owen Family Cookbook*, which grew out of her love for the culinary arts and for preparing food for her family; and

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

WHEREAS, she was the proud and loving mother of three daughters, Linda and Avonne Wortham and Melba Howard; and

WHEREAS, she will be sorely missed by her beloved granddaughters, Terri Howard Tacker and Kate Howard; and by her great-grandson, Huston Tacker, all of whom have inherited her extraordinary propensity for loving and caring for children; and

WHEREAS, Mildred Owen Wortham 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 historian and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor the memory of Mildred Owen Wortham, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character, her gentleness, and her ability to live the examined life with courage and conviction with a constant spirit of love.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mildred Owen Wortham.

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