

SENATE RESOLUTION 63

By Akbari

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend the members of the River City Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, on their thirtieth anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we should honor and specially commend those distinguished organizations whose stated goals advance the most noble precepts of human endeavors and whose history of service in pursuit of those goals stand as outstanding examples to the citizens of this great State; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable organization that evinces the greatest integrity and probity in all its chosen endeavors is The Links, Incorporated; and

WHEREAS, The Links is an international, not-for-profit corporation composed of more than 17,000 professional women of color who are committed to enhancing the quality of life in their respective communities, which are served by 299 chapters located in forty-one states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, and the United Kingdom; and

WHEREAS, accomplished, dedicated women who are active in public and charitable programs, the members of The Links are some of the most influential women in the world; they are business and civic leaders, role models, mentors, activists, and volunteers, and they work assiduously toward a common vision by making The Links synonymous with not only a chain of friendship but also a chain of purposeful public service; and

WHEREAS, the thirtieth anniversary of the River City Chapter of the Links, Incorporated, a local branch of this excellent national organization that has served the Memphis community well in myriad ways, will be celebrated on May 15, 2023; and

WHEREAS, originating with the sisters and co-founders Emma Jean Hubbard Stotts and Dr. Elma Hubbard Mardis, the River City Chapter began in 1987 as the River City Sette, and the

organization offered a medley of cultural, educational, spiritual, and civic programs and events to the Memphis area; and

WHEREAS, in 1991, the Sette participated in fundraisers and volunteered for the election of Memphis's first Black mayor, and in 1992, the organization launched its premier signature program, the Parent Youth Summit, and subsequently adopted five families from public housing centers as a follow-up to the event; and

WHEREAS, the River City Sette was approved as an interest group at the 28th National Assembly of The Links, Incorporated, in 1992, and finally, a year and a half after assisting the first Black mayor of Memphis in his election, the River City Sette officially joined The Links, Incorporated, and became the River City Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, in 1993 at the historic Peabody Hotel in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, the River City Chapter has provided thirty years of uninterrupted, transformational, and relevant philanthropy to the cultural, economic, and social fabric of Memphis and Shelby County, and they have even gone beyond the borders of the State to service Montego Bay, Jamaica, and Africa; and

WHEREAS, receiving many accolades for its endeavors, the River City Chapter has been recognized at local and national levels for its impressive implementation of the five national program facets and its effectiveness as a philanthropic entity; and

WHEREAS, dynamic chapter presidents have overseen spectacular chapter growth and award-winning programs from inception to the present; they are Elma H. Mardis, Charlene M. Turner, Norma F. Griffin, Martha P. Beard, Beverly C. Robertson, Carolyn B. Bishop, Charlotte M. Freeman, Inetta F. Rogers, Carla Stotts Hills, Gale Jones Carson, Ailene Oliver Booker, Vanecia Belser Kimbrow, and current president Michelle Fowlkes; and

WHEREAS, the River City Chapter has continually exceeded the mandated minimum service hours, even with the mandate increasing to match an expanded member base, and it has contributed over 49,000 documented hours of community service; and

WHEREAS, the direct economic impact of the River City Chapter is an estimated \$200,000, and the service hours, when considered by the national hourly volunteer pay rate, exceed \$1,200,000 in labor; and

WHEREAS, the River City Chapter of the Links, Incorporated, plans to continue its praiseworthy charitable efforts well past its thirtieth anniversary, supporting the Memphis community and beyond with the five facets of Services to Youth, The Arts, National Trends and Services, International Trends and Services, and Health and Human Services, and such a philanthropic association ought to be recognized for its social importance; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor and commend the members of the River City Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, on their thirtieth anniversary and for their exemplary service to Memphis and Shelby County.

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