

SENATE RESOLUTION 83

By McNally

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Mira Ryczke Kimmelman of Oak Ridge.

WHEREAS, the members of this legislative body were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Mira Ryczke Kimmelman, a Holocaust survivor who widely recounted her story of survival with the fervent hope that remembering the horrors of the past would help ensure that no one would ever suffer such atrocities again; and

WHEREAS, Mira Ryczke was born on September 17, 1923, in the seaside resort of Zoppot, a suburb of the free City of Danzig in Poland; her father, Moritz, was a grain merchant, and her mother, Eugenia, dedicated herself to raising Mira and her younger brother, Benno; and

WHEREAS, their happy life came to an abrupt end in 1939, when the Nazis invaded Danzig and drove the Ryczke family from their home, first to the ghettos in Warsaw and Tomaszow Mazowiecki, then to concentration camps Blizyn-Majdanek and Auschwitz, and finally on a horrific death march to Bergen-Belsen; and

WHEREAS, while Mira was ultimately liberated and reunited with her father, her mother and brother did not survive the Holocaust; and

WHEREAS, in 1946, she met another survivor, Max Kimmelman, a widower who had lost his wife and daughter in the Holocaust; the couple married in Germany on May 19, 1946, and with the assistance of family in Cincinnati, Ohio, they immigrated to the United States on August 2, 1948; Moritz Ryczke joined them the following year; and

WHEREAS, Mira and Max Kimmelman worked in Cincinnati for a number of years, and both of their sons were born there; they moved to Oak Ridge in August 1964, after Max Kimmelman's employer relocated to Rockwood; and

WHEREAS, Mira Kimmelman volunteered in a number of capacities in Oak Ridge and the Jewish community for fifty years, serving in her children's school when they were students,

teaching in and directing the religious school of the Jewish Congregation of Oak Ridge, teaching Hebrew, and tutoring children for Bar and Bat Mitzvah; and

WHEREAS, a woman of valor, Mrs. Kimmelman joined the Zionist Women's Group Hadassah and served as the local chapter president from 1969-1972 and 1990-1992, Southern Region president from 1981-1984, and National Board member from 1981-1986; she had also served on the Chevra Kadisha since 1972 and served as president of her Congregation from 1994-1997; and

WHEREAS, a leader in her community, Mira Kimmelman served as president of the American Field Service from 1977-1979 and president of the United Nations Committee of Oak Ridge from 1979-1982 and 1984-1993; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, she was the recipient of the Sertoma Annual Heritage and Freedom Award, the Knoxville Women's Club Annie Selwyn Award for Teaching and Lecturing on the Holocaust, the Oak Ridge Chapter of Hadassah National Leadership Award, the Women's League Light of Torah Award, the National Conference for Community and Justice Award for Religious Services, the National Hadassah's Deborah Award for Hebrew Teaching, the YWCA of Oak Ridge 2001 Women of Distinction Award in the category of religion, and the Jewish Congregation of Oak Ridge Recognition Award for forty years of teaching; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Kimmelman was a noted lecturer who spoke both locally and nationally to schools and other groups about her experiences in the Holocaust, and she was the author of *Echoes from the Holocaust: A Memoir* and *Life Beyond the Holocaust: Memories and Realities*; and

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

WHEREAS, she is lovingly remembered by her sons, Benno and Gene, her daughters-in-law, Joy and Caroline, and her grandchildren, Melanie, Michael, Max, and Ellie; and

WHEREAS, Mira Kimmelman was a Holocaust survivor who willingly spent the rest of her life sharing her experiences in the hope that no one would ever suffer in this way again, and it is fitting that we pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional woman; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor the memory of Mira Ryczke Kimmelman, reflecting upon her experiences in the Holocaust 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. Kimmelman.

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