

**Second Regular Session  
Seventy-fourth General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO**

**ENGROSSED**

LLS NO. M24-0889.01 Frank Stoner x5498

**SJM24-001**

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**SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 24-001**

101 **MEMORIALIZING SENATOR MARTHA EZZARD.**

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1           WHEREAS, The tributaries of Martha McElveen Ezzard's life fed  
2 a broad landscape of purposes, including politics, journalism, and law, as  
3 well as her commitments to her family, her writing, and her winery; and

4           WHEREAS, Martha was born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia, by  
5 parents who taught her to stay true to her values and speak up in  
6 challenging situations. She earned her BA in journalism at the University  
7 of Georgia and her MA in journalism at the University of Missouri. She  
8 and her husband, John, a physician, moved to the Denver area in 1968,  
9 where they raised their three children; and

10           WHEREAS, Martha became press aide to Colorado Governor  
11 John Love in 1972 and continued in this role to Governor John  
12 Vanderhoof after Love was appointed energy czar under President Nixon;

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
*Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.*  
*Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.*

SENATE  
Amended Final Rdg  
March 7, 2024

1 and

2 WHEREAS, Martha narrowly lost a primary for a Colorado Senate  
3 seat in 1976 but persevered and was elected to the Colorado House of  
4 Representatives in 1978; and

5 WHEREAS, She was subsequently elected to the Colorado Senate  
6 in 1980, becoming only the thirteenth woman elected to the body since its  
7 creation in 1876; and

8 WHEREAS, At the Women Who Govern panel in September  
9 1984, Martha recalled her first day as a representative, when she and  
10 another female House colleague were asked, "Which one of you ladies is  
11 Representative McElderry's secretary?" to which she wryly retorted, "One  
12 really good secretary is probably more productive than ten average state  
13 legislators"; and

14 WHEREAS, During Martha's years in the Colorado House and  
15 Senate, she worked diligently on issues related to water conservation,  
16 hazardous waste control, equal rights, and sunshine legislation; and

17 WHEREAS, While serving in the Colorado Senate, Martha chaired  
18 what was at the time called the Health and Environment Committee, was  
19 elected chair of the GOP caucus, and earned her JD from the University  
20 of Denver College of Law; and

21 WHEREAS, She was acknowledged with the 1988 Award for  
22 Legislative Excellence from the Colorado Public Health Association; and

23 WHEREAS, She was one of the seven women who launched the  
24 Women's Foundation of Colorado in response to a shared dream to  
25 strategically invest in the education and future of young women,  
26 particularly those from lower-income households; and

27 WHEREAS, Not to be belied by her soft Southern accent, Martha  
28 was a force to be reckoned with-a maverick, an independent-minded  
29 go-getter, a fighter for justice, and a woman determined to leave the  
30 world a better place; and

31 WHEREAS, After serving seven years in the Colorado Senate,  
32 feeling that she was more aligned with centrist philosophies, Martha  
33 resigned her seat and changed parties. In 1988, she was defeated in the

1 general election for Colorado's Sixth Congressional District; and

2 WHEREAS, Following her career in Colorado politics and law,  
3 Martha moved back to her native Georgia, where she joined the editorial  
4 board of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. For ten years, she wrote a  
5 regular political column and a weekly column; and

6 WHEREAS, Martha was most proud of her work on several  
7 special projects, including her 1995 series on hiking 80 miles of the  
8 Appalachian Trail as one of the journalists from five newspapers who  
9 combined efforts to hike the trail in its entirety; her 2001 series on the  
10 need for indigent defense reform in Georgia; and her 1999 series, "The  
11 Trees of Our Lives", which focused on saving special old trees in the  
12 Atlanta area and for which she spent a night sleeping over 100 feet high  
13 up in a 200-foot-tall tulip poplar tree; and

14 WHEREAS, The Society of Professional Journalists recognized  
15 Martha with the 2002 Green Eyeshade Award in Editorial Writing for the  
16 series "When Justice is a Crime". She also received the 25th Annual  
17 Pioneer Black Journalist Award from the Atlanta Association of Black  
18 Journalists and the Wilderness Society's Aldo Leopold Award for her  
19 environmental writing; and

20 WHEREAS, Martha and her husband, John, rusticated to his  
21 family's fifth-generation farm near Tiger, Georgia, on which John grew  
22 up. The pair worked tirelessly to create Tiger Mountain Vineyards, whose  
23 fine wines won more than 250 awards and helped put Georgia wines on  
24 the map; and

25 WHEREAS, Martha went on to write a book entitled *The Second*  
26 *Bud*, narrating the story of how she and John created a new second life  
27 and profession in their 60s by saving John's family farm and starting a  
28 winery. Martha won the Georgia Author of the Year Award for this book,  
29 which chronicles the colorful characters of old-time Appalachia with the  
30 new visions of a flourishing modern farm winery; and

31 WHEREAS, Martha's family remembers her as bigger than life; a  
32 woman ahead of her time; strong-willed; and committed to the  
33 environment, to justice, to her family, and the communities in which she  
34 lived; now, therefore,

35 *Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Seventy-fourth General*

1 *Assembly of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives*  
2 *concurring herein:*

3 (1) That, in the death of Martha McElveen Ezzard, the people of  
4 the State of Colorado have lost a devoted public servant, an outstanding  
5 citizen, and an invaluable voice for equal rights;

6 (2) That we, the members of the Colorado General Assembly, do  
7 hereby extend our deep and heartfelt sympathy to the members of her  
8 family; and

9 (3) That we pay tribute to a dedicated, strong-willed,  
10 independent-minded woman who strove to leave the world better than she  
11 found it.

12 *Be It Further Resolved*, That copies of this Joint Memorial be sent  
13 to Senator Ezzard's children: Shelly Ezzard Smith; Lisa Annette Ezzard;  
14 John Arrendale Ezzard, Jr.; grandchildren: Georgia Camille O'Farrell;  
15 Samuel Davant Smith; Sydney Blair Smith; Sean MacRae Smith; Johna  
16 deWinter Ezzard; Trimble James Ezzard; and nieces: Martha Katherine  
17 Kelly Johnson; Linda Caroline Kelly Ratcliff; and Stacey Lynne Kelly  
18 White.