

HOUSE BILL 29

By Eldridge

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, Chapter 1, Part 3, relative to the official state botanical garden.

WHEREAS, the general assembly finds that there is no specific botanical garden currently designated as the official state botanical garden of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the University of Tennessee's gardens are part of the state's land grant university and its state-wide institute of agriculture; and the gardens conduct research, education, and outreach programs in support of the university's land grant mission; and many states already recognize their land grant university's garden as their state botanical garden; and

WHEREAS, in 1983, an annual flower trial garden was located on 10-acres that is part of the institute of agriculture campus establishing the University of Tennessee gardens; and

WHEREAS, the University of Tennessee gardens are truly one of the most beautiful and educational gardens of the state where visitors can view thousands of native and cultivated plants which include trees, shrubs, roses, wildflowers, annuals, perennials, herbs, ornamental grasses, groundcovers, vines, aquatic plants, and turf; and special attractions feature a kitchen garden, rose garden, rock garden, bio-energy garden, shade garden, and a children's garden planned for the future; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the 10-acre gardens in Knoxville, additional satellite gardens have been established at the university's institute of agriculture research & education centers in Jackson and Crossville, and another is being planned for Spring Hill; and these four gardens across the state reflect the different climatic regions throughout Tennessee, allow scientists to test plant adaptability, and enable Tennesseans to observe plant performance; and

WHEREAS, the gardens in Knoxville, Jackson, and Crossville are one of the state's most valued resources and are visited annually by over 100,000 persons and hundreds of

school groups, families, and green industry-professionals who walk their paths and behold their splendor; and all gardens are free and open to the public; and

WHEREAS, the gardens serve as an interdisciplinary resource center for faculty, students, researchers, and industry professionals in horticulture, natural sciences, landscape design and architecture, communications, and the arts; and

WHEREAS, in today's world it is essential to man's well-being that tranquil sites be maintained where people can observe, study, and explore nature's bountiful wonders; and the University of Tennessee's gardens are one of those places; and

WHEREAS, it is only fitting and proper to recognize the achievement, the outstanding research and educational resource, and the beauty represented by the gardens; and it is only appropriate that the significance of this institution to the state and to all Tennesseans be recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, Chapter 1, Part 3, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated section:

The University of Tennessee Botanical Gardens are designated as the official state botanical garden.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.