

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 12

By Floyd

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Dr. Mary Barker on her meritorious service to the State of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor those outstanding educators who have performed with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm throughout their years of industry to provide the highest quality education for Tennessee's students; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mary Barker is one such estimable educator who has distinguished herself as a professional of the greatest dedication, ability, and integrity during her extensive career in public education; and

WHEREAS, after finishing her high school career as salutatorian of her 1945 graduating class in Woodsfield, Ohio, Dr. Barker began her collegiate studies at David Lipscomb College in Nashville and later enrolled at Boston University as a part-time student after relocating to Massachusetts in 1947; and

WHEREAS, originally pursuing a career in music, Dr. Barker attended the New England Conservatory, where she majored in voice and aimed towards becoming an opera performer; after obtaining her Bachelor of Music degree in 1952, she accepted employment in Washington, D.C., with plans to save the money necessary to continue her musical training in Italy; and

WHEREAS, her plans were forever altered in October of 1953, when she married her devoted husband, Jack Barker, whom she had first met in 1951 after he had been recalled to military service and stationed at Fort Devens, Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS, relocating to Chattanooga, Dr. Barker enrolled in evening classes at the University of Chattanooga, where she encountered an adjunct professor who also served as the principal of Rossville Junior High School; he asked her to teach the seventh grade at his school in January of 1956; and

WHEREAS, buoyed by her teaching experience at Rossville, Mary Barker enrolled fulltime at the University of Chattanooga that summer, obtained her Bachelor of Science in Education degree in 1957, and embarked upon her professional teaching career at Chattanooga High School; and

WHEREAS, challenging and inspiring her students, Dr. Barker taught at Chattanooga High School until 1968, serving from 1963 to 1968 in the capacity of Assistant Principal for Curriculum while also teaching three classes and earning her Master of Arts degree in English Literature at Vanderbilt University in 1965; and

WHEREAS, in 1968, Tennessee expanded its public higher education network with the establishment of a new system of community colleges, and Mary Barker accepted the position of Professor of English at Cleveland State Community College. She taught numerous courses in Composition, Literature, and Music Appreciation, as well as new elective courses such as Philosophy, Popular Culture, and English and Communications Skills over the next two and half decades; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Barker completed her final degree in 1977, receiving a doctorate in English Literature from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville; and

WHEREAS, during her tenure with Cleveland State, Dr. Barker's exceptional abilities enabled her advance up the faculty and administrative ladder, and she served as Head of the Humanities Division from 1973-77, Head of the Humanities and Social Science Division from 1977-78, Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences from 1978-1984, Director of Institutional Planning and Research from 1984-1987, Interim Dean of Academic Affairs from 1987-88, and Dean of Academic Affairs from 1988-92; and

WHEREAS, after retiring from Cleveland State in 1992, Dr. Barker joined the administration of Chattanooga State Technical Community College in 1993 as Vice-President of Academic Affairs, first serving as Interim Vice-President from November 1992 to April 1993; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Barker stepped down from Chattanooga State in 1998 and returned to the classroom to teach the next year as an adjunct professor at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, a position she held until 2005; and

WHEREAS, during her estimable career, Dr. Barker has received numerous awards and accolades, including the Woman of Distinction award of the American Lung Association and the Evans Award as Outstanding Teacher at Chattanooga High School, but perhaps the most appropriate tribute has been the designation of the Mary T. Barker Humanities Building at Cleveland State in her honor; and

WHEREAS, an active member of her community, Dr. Barker is a current member of the Board of Directors for the Chattanooga Symphony and Opera Association, a past board member of the Tennessee Humanities Council, a former chair of the Board of Choral Arts, a former writer of program notes for the Chattanooga Symphony Concerts, and one of the first four women to ever be accepted into the Rotary Club, serving in the Cleveland Chapter in 1989; and

WHEREAS, her many accomplishments aside, Mary Barker enjoys the loving companionship of her husband of more than fifty years, Jack Barker, and they are faithful members of First Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, where they are actively involved in the various programs of the church; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Barker exemplifies the spirit and allegiance to family and community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, throughout her estimable career, Dr. Barker has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of her colleagues and students alike; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Dr. Mary Barker on her exemplary career in public education, salute her meritorious service to the State of Tennessee, and extend to her our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement and every continued success in her future endeavors.

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