

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 162

By Keisling

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Kellie Walker of Scott County.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the untimely passing of Kellie Michelle Asberry Walker; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Walker was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for her fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, born on May 15, 1984, in Scott County, Mrs. Walker was the daughter of Jeff and Pat Asberry; she was a graduate of Scott High School, and she received a master's degree from Tennessee Technological University before she briefly entered a doctoral program; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Walker returned home to pursue nonprofit work, and in 2009, she began her career at the Children's Center of the Cumberland, in which position her passion for helping local children grew exponentially; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, she was named executive director of the Children's Center of the Cumberland, and she earned the respect of her peers and superiors alike for the exemplary quality of her work; in 2014, Mrs. Walker also became executive director of the Fentress County satellite children's advocacy center; and

WHEREAS, with a vision to protect the most vulnerable children of Scott County, Mrs. Walker provided quality care and service, and she was responsible for providing staff training opportunities, contracting local nurses for victims of child abuse, and obtaining transitional housing for children in state custody; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the "Haven of Help and Hope" program was established and provided transitional housing for children while in state custody; subsequently, Mrs. Walker

implemented Project 5000 in the summer of 2017 to provide easily accessible meals to children and families across Scott County; and

WHEREAS, after learning about the effectiveness of facility dogs in child advocacy centers, Mrs. Walker was instrumental in welcoming Lucia, the first facility dog in an East Tennessee child advocacy center; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Walker and her husband founded Kip's Kloset in 2020 to honor their late son, Kip McCoy; through the organization, they collected clothing and other necessities for children that were placed in state custody with no personal belongings; and

WHEREAS, through opportunities with the Department of Children's Services, local law enforcement, and the Elgin Foundation, Mrs. Walker strengthened many relationships with the working partners of the children's center; she also ensured support and services with several other nonprofit organizations; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Walker dedicated her time and efforts to several Oneida businesses and organizations, including working fundraising auctions hosted by Soul Sisters; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Mrs. Walker was named the *Independent Herald/Scott County Chamber of Commerce Person of the Year* in 2021 for her selflessness and perseverance through life's toughest battles; and

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

WHEREAS, she will be mourned but fondly remembered by her parents and her beloved husband, Dustin; her two cherished daughters, Shelbie Caroline and Vera Grace; a sister, Amanda (Josh) Overton; her nephews, Fletcher Overton, Hayden Dunlap, Kamden Dunlap, and Greysen Dunlap; her nieces, Stella Overton and Clairra Overton; her grandmothers, Ruth Asberry and Linnie McCoy; her aunts, Sandra (Edward III) Green, Vickie (Doug) Sheridan, Rosemary Deaton, and Cindy (Wade) Slaven; her uncle, Greg (Angie) Asberry; her mother-in-law, Susan (Kelvin) King; her father-in-law, Gary Walker; her sisters-in-law, Sarah (Blake)

Dunlap and Kayla (Keith) Yantz; and a brother-in-law, Clay King, in addition to a host of other relatives and adored friends; and

WHEREAS, in addition to her infant son, she was preceded in death by her grandfathers, Perry Asberry and Barney McCoy; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Walker was a devout Christian whose faith remained unwavering through the loss of her son and the battle with cancer that followed, and she was an active member of the Black Oak Baptist Church in West Oneida; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Walker leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Kellie Michelle Asberry Walker, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character 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. Walker.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.