

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 248

By Byrd

A RESOLUTION to adopt “Echoes from a Soldier’s Grave” as an official veterans poem of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, from time to time, the members of the General Assembly have adopted certain poems as official State poems; and

WHEREAS, “Echoes from a Soldier’s Grave,” by Sergeant First Class Ernest E. Sharp, is a poignant tribute to Tennessee’s finest sons and daughters who, following in the patriotic tradition for which the Volunteer State is renowned, believed in the justice of the cause to protect our national security and liberty as members of the United States armed forces; and

WHEREAS, written from the perspective of a soldier who has made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of freedom, each stanza of the poem ends in a simple, heart-rending question for those back home to consider as they appreciate the daily rhythms of their lives: “Why don’t you remember me?”; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant First Class Ernest E. Sharp’s poem is a fitting tribute to those Tennesseans who bravely served their nation in times of war and reads as follows:

You said go and away I went
I didn’t know where I’d be sent
But I left my home just for you
And vowed to serve the red, white, and blue
Now there you are safe and sound
See I didn’t let you down
I died to keep you free
Why don’t you remember me?

Your big football game will soon begin
Now you're gonna hear our song again
As the band plays loud and clear
"Star Spangled Banner" is what you hear
Now look around at all you hold dear
You know you have no need to fear
'Cause I died you're safe and free
Why can't you remember me?

It's Christmas time the family's all there
Holiday music filled the air
No need to worry about danger at all
'Cause somewhere soldiers are standing tall
They gave your freedom whatever the price
Some will make the supreme sacrifice
I am one that died to keep you free
Why can't you remember me?

Another year will soon end
But for you a new one will begin
Don't let my death bring you sorrow
Let it bring hope for tomorrow
For I am not asking you to cry
I just lie here and wonder why
I died to keep you free
Why can't you remember me?; and

WHEREAS, "Echoes from a Soldier's Grave" is clearly deserving of the special honor of being designated as an official veterans poem of the State of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that "Echoes from a Soldier's Grave" by Sergeant First Class Ernest E. Sharp is hereby designated as an official veterans poem of the State of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Secretary of State.