

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 703

By Whitson

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Pat Petty of Franklin.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Pat Petty; and

WHEREAS, beloved throughout the community for his role as Santa Claus, Mr. Petty was a devoted husband, father, friend, and mentor who brought joy to all who were blessed to know him; and

WHEREAS, a proud resident of Franklin, where he was born and raised, Pat Petty graduated from Franklin High School in 1964; it was there that he met his dear companion, Linda Dianne Mahan, and the two were married in June 1966; and

WHEREAS, exhibiting a strong work ethic from a young age, Mr. Petty worked at Pigg and Peach men's store as a teenager and attended Tennessee Technological University for a time before returning home to work at Warren Paints; he also served as a member of the Tennessee National Guard; and

WHEREAS, in May 1969, he gained employment with Middle Tennessee Electric (MTE), where he served as a lineman and later became a foreman; a member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, he traveled with work crews to other cities during his time with MTE to assist after disasters, and he helped install electrical grids throughout Williamson County, retiring in 2008 after thirty-nine devoted years of service; and

WHEREAS, his favorite job, however, was that of portraying Santa Claus; Mr. Petty became a Franklin icon, driving red convertibles with the license plate "SClaus"; he attended the Charles W. Howard Santa Claus School in Midland, Michigan, from 2005 to 2016 to hone his

craft, and he was a treasured seasonal fixture at local schools, churches, parades, and events. He also visited and brought comfort to children in hospitals and those in nursing homes; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Petty's Santa career highlights included appearing in Cracker Barrel's *Christmas Wish Book*, on the field for the Tennessee Titans, and at the State Capitol, where he assisted Governor Bill Haslam in lighting the Christmas tree; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his role as Mr. Claus, Pat Petty served his community as a member of the Optimist Club, through which he coached basketball and softball, ultimately serving as softball commissioner for several years; alongside his wife, he served Franklin and Williamson County as a lifetime member of the PTA and BGA Wildcat Club, and he was a board member of the Rogersshire Neighborhood Association for many years; and

WHEREAS, he was also wholly devoted to his family and always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Petty is survived by his cherished daughter, Leya Petty White, and his sister, Mary Petty Pewitt, and her family; and

WHEREAS, he was preceded in death by his beloved wife of fifty-five years, Dianne Mahan Petty; granddaughter, Amelia Patton White; mother, Virginia Smithson Petty; and in-laws, Millie and Speedy Mahan; and

WHEREAS, Pat Petty leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity, compassion, and devoted community service; he was the quintessential Santa, not only because he looked the part but because of his genuine, benevolent spirit and his commitment to bringing hope and cheer to those of all ages; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional gentleman 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 Pat Petty, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his 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 Mr. Petty.

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.