

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 745

By Gillespie

A RESOLUTION to honor Carlos the raccoon, the official
Groundhog Day prognosticator of Collierville.

WHEREAS, the origin of Groundhog Day grew from the Christian holiday of Candlemas in Europe; on February 2, Christians would take their candles to the church for blessings on their households for the remaining winter; and

WHEREAS, an animal was first associated with the holiday in Germany when, according to folklore, if a hedgehog saw its shadow on Candlemas Day, there would be a second winter or six more weeks of cold weather; and

WHEREAS, as German settlers immigrated to America, the Candlemas story traveled into the United States; a native, hibernating animal was chosen to continue the tradition, and the groundhog was selected; and

WHEREAS, on February 2, 1886, Groundhog Day was first documented in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, by *The Punxsutawney Spirit* newspaper with a proclamation claiming "Today is Groundhog Day and up to the time of going to press the beast has not seen its shadow"; and

WHEREAS, the tradition of Groundhog Day animal prognosticators grew beyond Punxsutawney Phil to Staten Island Chuck in Staten Island, New York, Sir Walter Wally of Raleigh, North Carolina, and even to the small community of Unadilla, Nebraska, with Unadilla Bill; and

WHEREAS, on February 2, 2021, Carlos, a raccoon, the state animal of Tennessee, residing in Collierville, Tennessee, was named the official Groundhog Day prognosticator for Collierville by Mayor Stan Joyner, continuing the tradition of a native species searching for a shadow to signify an early spring; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we join with the good people of Collierville as they honor Carlos the raccoon, the Groundhog Day prognosticator of Collierville.

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.