

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 7024

By Jones

A RESOLUTION to recognize Tennessee Supreme Court Justice Sharon Lee on the occasion of her retirement from the bench.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that we should honor those jurists who have performed with uncommon devotion and probity throughout their years on the bench; and

WHEREAS, Supreme Court Justice Sharon Lee is one such individual, who, after an illustrious judicial career, is taking her well-earned retirement after fourteen years on the Tennessee Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, a native of Madisonville, Justice Lee graduated from the University of Tennessee with a degree in business administration and earned her Juris Doctorate from the University of Tennessee College of Law before entering the legal profession; and

WHEREAS, she worked in private practice from 1978 to 2004, representing business entities and individuals in civil and criminal matters; drawn to public service; she served as an official attorney for Monroe County, the City of Madisonville, and the City of Vonore; and

WHEREAS, Justice Sharon Lee began her judicial career in 2002, when she was appointed to serve as the municipal judge for the City of Madisonville; and

WHEREAS, a trailblazer for women in the legal profession, Justice Lee became the first woman to serve on the Eastern Section of the Tennessee Court of Appeals in its seventy-nine-year history when she was appointed to serve on that court in 2004; and

WHEREAS, appointed to the Tennessee Supreme Court in 2008 by Governor Phil Bredesen, the Honorable Sharon Lee has upheld the highest tenets of the law while standing as a beacon of unwavering dedication to judicial excellence during her tenure on that august body, which included a two-year term as chief justice from 2014 to 2016; and

WHEREAS, as chief justice, she promoted access to justice, establishment of the State's first Business Court pilot project, implementation of electronic filing, a review of the State's indigent representation system, and a docket clean-up initiative; and

WHEREAS, Justice Lee has served with distinction on the Tennessee Code Commission, the Appellate Mediation Task Force, and the Continuity of Operations Plan Committee and as the Supreme Court Liaison to the Board of Law Examiners, the Advisory Commission on Rules of Practice and Procedure, the Alternative Dispute Resolution Commission, the Tennessee Lawyers Assistance Program, and the Technology Oversight Committee; and

WHEREAS, during her illustrious legal career, Justice Lee has been a member of the Tennessee Judicial Conference Executive Committee, the Tennessee Bar Association, the Tennessee Lawyers' Association for Women, the East Tennessee Lawyers' Association for Women, the Monroe County Bar Association, the Knoxville Bar Association, the National Association of Women Judges, the Tennessee Municipal Judges Association, the Tennessee County Attorneys Association, the American Bar Association, the American Judicature Society, and Scribes; and

WHEREAS, Justice Lee is a Fellow of the Tennessee Bar Foundation, the Knoxville Bar Foundation, and the American Bar Foundation and a member of the Law Fund, the Alumni Advisory Council, and the Dean's Circle at the University of Tennessee College of Law; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, the Honorable Sharon Lee has received the Justice Frank F. Drowota III Outstanding Judicial Service Award, the University of Tennessee Distinguished Alumna Award, the University of Tennessee Centennial Alumnus Award, the University of Tennessee Alumni Professional Achievement Award, the Grayfred Gray Public Service in Mediation Award, the Legal Aid of East Tennessee's Chief Justice William M. Barker Equal Access to Justice Award, the ABOTA Tennessee Chapter Courage Award, the East Tennessee Women's Leadership Council's Lizzie Crozier French Award, the Webb School of Knoxville Distinguished Alumni Award, the Girl Scouts Council of the Southern

Appalachians' Woman of Achievement Award, the East Tennessee Lawyers' Association for Women's Spirit of Justice Award, and the National Association of Women Judges' Spotlight Award; and

WHEREAS, throughout her estimable career, Justice Lee has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of members of the bench and the bar alike; 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 extend to Justice Sharon Lee our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement from the bench 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 and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.