

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 48

By McNally

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Charles R. "Charlie Burchett, Sr., of Knoxville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Charles R. "Charlie" Burchett, Sr., longtime Dean of Students at the University of Tennessee and the father of our valued colleague, Senator Tim Burchett; and

WHEREAS, Dean Burchett was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, he was a friend to nearly three generations of University of Tennessee students during his meritorious forty-six year tenure as Dean of Students; a stalwart student advocate, he built a reputation as a tough, but fair, disciplinarian; and

WHEREAS, ever active in his community, Charlie Burchett was first elected to the Knoxville Board of Education in 1965, and his colleagues evidenced their faith in his leadership abilities by electing him chair during his first term on the Board; and

WHEREAS, he deftly presided over the Board to help guide Knoxville through the tumultuous years of school desegregation; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Burchett was later instrumental in East Side Elementary School being named in honor of Sarah Moore Greene, a civil rights icon and the first African American school board member in Knoxville; although this decision was controversial at the time, he remained staunchly committed to his position: that a person of Ms. Greene's eminent stature should be recognized by her community; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Burchett had also served his community with distinction as a member of the Knox County Library Board and President of the West Knoxville Republican Club; and

WHEREAS, Dean Burchett was a World War II combat veteran who proudly served his country in the South Pacific and China as a member of the United States Marine Corps; and

WHEREAS, while Mr. Burchett was a sophomore at Austin Peay State University, ranking officers from the Uniformed Services paid a visit to the campus and urged students not to drop out of school to enlist in the military; instead, they encouraged these fine young men to stay in college, graduate, and then enroll in the B-12 program to become a commissioned officer in either the U.S. Navy or Marine Corps, because there was a great need for more officers in the Armed Forces during this period of World War II; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Burchett and others heeded this wise advice and enrolled in the B-12 program; as he was completing his first semester of the program at Georgia Tech, an older member of the B-12 unit told him that if he purposely failed his exams, he would immediately qualify for service on the front lines; and

WHEREAS, wanting desperately to contribute to the war effort, Mr. Burchett approached his Captain the next day to volunteer for duty overseas; and

WHEREAS, after his gallant service in World War II, Charlie Burchett continued his education; he earned a Bachelor of Science degree at Austin Peay State University in his hometown of Clarksville, and a Master of Arts degree from George Peabody College; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Burchett is survived by his loving wife of sixty years, Joyce Hicks Burchett; his daughter and son-in-law; Joyce Burchett High and Dr. Bill High; his sons and daughters-in-law, Charles R. Burchett, Jr., and Dr. Rocio Huet and Senator Tim Burchett and Allison Beaver Burchett; and his grandchildren, Billy, Charlie, and David High, Ann Kirby, Sam Burchett, and Codee Fineburg; and

WHEREAS, men of Charles R. Burchett, Sr.'s prominence do not often walk among us, and it is fitting that 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 SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Charles R. "Charlie" Burchett, Sr., reflecting fondly upon his indelible legacy as Dean of Students at the University of Tennessee and as a community leader of conviction and strength.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Dean Burchett.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.