

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 59

By McNally

A RESOLUTION to honor the life and memory of Senator Curtis Bentley "Ben" Atchley, Jr., of Knoxville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Senator Ben Atchley of Knoxville, whose lifetime of distinguished public service improved the quality of life for every Tennessean. In his passing, Tennessee has lost one of her finest statesmen and a gentleman of courage and high character, dedicated to his State and Nation; and

WHEREAS, a native son of Tennessee, Curtis Bentley "Ben" Atchley, Jr., was born on June 30, 1930, to Curtis and Alma Atchley in Knoxville, where he attended Young High School and the University of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, a proud military veteran, Ben Atchley served with distinction as a Seabee in the United States Navy before completing ten years of exemplary service in the United States Naval Reserve; and

WHEREAS, a highly successful businessman, Senator Atchley served ten years with South Central Bell before embarking upon a career in the insurance industry, with the founding of Atchley, Cunningham & Shoemaker; and

WHEREAS, Ben Atchley began his political career in 1972, winning election to the Tennessee House of Representatives; after serving two distinguished terms in the House during the 88<sup>th</sup> and 89<sup>th</sup> General Assemblies, he was elected to the Tennessee State Senate by the people of Knox County in 1976 as their State Senator for the 6<sup>th</sup> Senate District; and

WHEREAS, his leadership abilities were recognized by his colleagues, resulting in his selection as Senate Republican Caucus Chairman of the 93<sup>rd</sup> and 94<sup>th</sup> General Assemblies and Senate Republican Leader in the 95<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, in which capacity he continued to

serve until his retirement after the 103<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly, making his tenure as Senate Republican Leader the longest in Tennessee history; and

WHEREAS, Senator Atchley was a member of the Board of Directors of the State Legislative Leaders Foundation, serving as its chairman in 1995-1998 and chairman emeritus in 1999, and a member of the Advisory Council of the Government Ethics Center, a division of the Josephson Institute for the Advancement of Ethics; and

WHEREAS, highly active in a multitude of Knoxville-Knox County civic and service organizations, Senator Atchley was a member and past president of the Optimist Club of South Knoxville; a member of the South Knoxville Lodge #769 F & A Masons, Scottish Rite and Shriner; Sons of the American Revolution; Leadership Knoxville, Class of 1985; Leadership Knoxville Board of Directors; Greater Knoxville Sport Corporation Board of Directors; and the Advisory Board of First Tennessee Bank; and

WHEREAS, Senator Atchley was no stranger to awards and accolades during his illustrious career in public service, and he was honored as Statesman of the Year in 1996 by the Tennessee Republican Party; and

WHEREAS, Senator Atchley evinced his faith as a member of Graystone Presbyterian Church, where he worshiped for fifty-one years and served as a Ruling Elder, taught Sunday School, and sang with the Chancel Choir; and

WHEREAS, preceded in death by his parents and his brothers, Jack and Ed Atchley, Senator Atchley is survived by his beloved wife of sixty-eight years, Sue K. Atchley; his son, Jerry (Cathy) Atchley; his daughter, Cindy Atchley; his granddaughters, Lori (Jeremy) Maupin and Jennifer Atchley; his great-grandsons, Ayden and Andrew Maupin; his brothers, Bob (Joyce) Atchley and Blaine (Carol) Atchley; and a host of extended family members and dear friends; and

WHEREAS, Ben Atchley leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, a true beloved son of Tennessee who took great pride in making his community and State a better place for all, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the extraordinary life of Senator Ben Atchley; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Senator Curtis Bentley "Ben" Atchley, Jr., reflecting fondly upon his resolute character, his years of admirable service to the people of Tennessee, 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 Senator Atchley.

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