

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 164

By Oliver

A RESOLUTION to recognize the Rho Psi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., on the ninety-fifth anniversary of its founding.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly takes great pleasure in recognizing those organizations that promote brotherhood, community service, and societal progress; and

WHEREAS, one such organization is the Rho Psi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., which celebrates the ninety-fifth anniversary of its founding this year; and

WHEREAS, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., is an international fraternal organization founded on November 17, 1911, at Howard University in Washington, D.C.; deeply committed to academic excellence, community service, and leadership development, the fraternity has been a driving force in uplifting African-American communities and promoting positive change for over a century; and

WHEREAS, on April 11, 1930, Rho Psi Chapter #39 was founded at Tennessee A&I State College, now Tennessee State University (TSU), through the efforts of College President William J. Hale, Professor James F. McClellan, Robert E. Clay, and Delta, Gamma Phi, and Eta Psi chapters; Rho Psi was the first chapter of a Greek-letter organization established on the campus and the only chapter of Omega Psi Phi organized in 1930; and

WHEREAS, the charter members of the Rho Psi Chapter were Ned Rawls, George Hale, Halton Williams, William Harris, Kurtis Clay, Thomas Withrow, James Taylor, and John Wallace; and

WHEREAS, only one decade later, during the 1940 conclave, Rho Psi Chapter, deemed the model chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, stood in the spotlight as it gave to the national organization its Lampados Song (pledge club song), composed by Hilton Owens, and

its Sweetheart Song, composed by Don Q. Pullen; the national body voted unanimously that recordings of these two songs be made by Rho Psi Chapter and circulated wherever chapters and Omega men were located; and

WHEREAS, in 1952-1953, it is rumored that, while doing a military march at a lampados pledge session, one of the lamps, Charles Dowdy, Jr., did not stop and continued to march, at the end of which he said, "Omega Omega Omega Psi Phi"; this was adopted by the brothers (with Joe Stamps, Neophyte Commandant) on campus, and they put words and steps together and started the first Que Hop in the fraternity; and

WHEREAS, they also developed four principals of hopping—Style, Soul, Grace, and Expression—and then adopted "the Hop," which has won many national conclave and Greek shows; the Rho Psi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi was the first Greek organization to hop, and this is where hopping was started and done with perfection; and

WHEREAS, the Rho Psi Chapter ended the 1961-1962 academic year with 105 financial brothers, the highest scholarship on campus, forty brothers on the dean's list, seven of fourteen student council seats held by Omegas, and five brothers commissioned in the U.S. Air Force; and

WHEREAS, the 25th Grand Basileus Cary D. Jacobs (1961-1964) and the national executive secretary visited the campus in 1961-1962, and, upon reporting to the national body, stated this is the "Mighty" Rho Psi Chapter, thus establishing the name "MIGHTY RHO PSI CHAPTER"; and

WHEREAS, in 2000, "Project Rho Psi 2000" was spearheaded by Larry Brown, 5th District Director Mark Bishop, and a board of directors that included Walter Vincent, Floyd Harrison, David Saunders, Joe Emmons, Woodrow Bell, Rick Jones, Alfred Motlow, Willie Bates, Gene Robinson, and Philmore Graham; and

WHEREAS, Project Rho Psi 2000 helped erect the first Greek monument on TSU's campus and endowed over \$150,000; a second campaign, launched by the Rho Psi Alumni Chapter in 2016 and called Project Rho Psi Reloaded, raised another \$100,000 to expand the monument and create more opportunity for perpetual giving; and

WHEREAS, the monument expansion was completed in 2019, thanks to the leadership of the Project Rho Psi Reloaded committee: Harrison Foy, chair; Alvino Douglass, president; Martez Moore, vice president; Woody Bell; Alfred Gordon; Floyd Harrison; Jeffrey Midcalf; and Jonathan Railey; and

WHEREAS, the Rho Psi Alumni Chapter, which was established in 2011, was the first chapter to be recognized with the TBR Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Philanthropy; and

WHEREAS, the Rho Psi Chapter is the only Greek-letter organization on any HBCU or PWI to erect a perpetual giving monument and giving model; and

WHEREAS, the Rho Psi Chapter has always endeavored to foster brotherly love and fraternal spirit at Tennessee State University, and the many men who have been initiated into Rho Psi are a testament to the chapter's success; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we recognize and honor the Rho Psi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., as its members celebrate the ninety-fifth anniversary of the chapter's founding, extending our best wishes for every continued success.

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.