

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1173

By Lamar

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Brian Thomas Clay of Memphis.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Brian Thomas Clay of Memphis; and

WHEREAS, Brian Clay 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, born on July 11, 1969, in Cleveland, Ohio, Mr. Clay became fascinated with the stage and politics early in his life, and these interests paved the way for a fruitful career dedicated to community service and media activism; and

WHEREAS, Brian Clay attended LeMoyne-Owen College in Memphis, where he discovered his true passion for political science; this revelation ultimately led him to serve as a legislative liaison for the Memphis City Council, an experience that immersed him in local politics and community issues and truly set the stage for his impactful career; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Clay was the founder and executive director of Greater Memphis Media, Inc., a 501(c)(3) social justice journalism organization that has gone above and beyond the boundaries of traditional media by actively engaging in social justice initiatives and community development and standing as a beacon of change and advocacy in the media industry; and

WHEREAS, since its inception, Greater Memphis Media, Inc., has formed strategic partnerships, including a joint venture with TSD-TV Multimedia Group and Best Media, Inc., to expand its technical footprint throughout Memphis and Shelby County and to amplify the voices of and address issues facing the local African-American community; and

WHEREAS, Brian Clay also advocated for public education and fought illiteracy in the Memphis community through programs such as the "I LOVE READING" initiative, visiting underserved elementary schools to promote reading and literacy; and

WHEREAS, Greater Memphis Media, Inc., has also provided scholarships to LeMoyne-Owen College and first-year HBCU students from Memphis and Shelby County, emphasizing literacy programs and partnering with other African-American nonprofit organizations; and

WHEREAS, Brian Clay's career includes service as president of the NAACP College Chapter; editor of *The Magician*, the campus paper at LeMoyne-Owen College; and contributor of insightful political columns for *The Tri-State Defender* newspaper; his extensive knowledge of local, national, and international politics made his articles a must-read for Memphis citizens; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, Mr. Clay launched *The Brian Clay Chronicles*, an award-winning talk show dedicated to providing perceptive information and ideas for modern urban intellectuals; the show has since become a platform for engaging discussions featuring influential figures and spanning topics such as politics, business, sports, and more; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his advocacy, Brian Clay was committed to his faith and served Gethsemane Garden Church of God in Christ as deacon and director of programs; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to accolades, he was a recipient of the 2016 *Black American Moguls Magazine* Humanitarian Award; and

WHEREAS, as Memphis continues to grow and evolve, the legacy and the work of Brian Clay and Greater Memphis Media, Inc., will continue to stand as a testament to the power and influence of media, social justice, and community engagement; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional community leader and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Brian Thomas Clay, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character 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 Mr. Clay.

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.