

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1235

By Lundberg

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Michael Maren of Nashville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of our friend and colleague Michael "Mike" Maren, who was a stalwart champion for students and teachers in Tennessee during his decade-long tenure as research analyst for the Senate Education Committee; and

WHEREAS, Michael Maren helped shape the State's education policy while serving under three Chairs, Senator Dolores Gresham, Senator Brian Kelsey, and most recently, Senator Jon Lundberg; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Maren was passionate about improving education and giving children access to opportunities that he had not been afforded; and

WHEREAS, Michael Maren amassed and retained a great deal of institutional knowledge as he shepherded every major education reform enacted by the General Assembly in the last ten years, including TISA, the Focus Act, the creation of the Tennessee Charter School Commission, and the establishment of the Tennessee Promise and Reconnect scholarship programs; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Maren was especially gifted at legislative strategy, and he had that rare ability to bring all parties to the table to negotiate the best policy reforms for the children of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, he was always fair and transparent when communicating with stakeholders and was well-respected by legislators and staff from both sides of the aisle; and

WHEREAS, one of Michael's greatest gifts was his ability to build community and bring people together, be it just for a friendly lunch or to solve some of the State's biggest education policy challenges; and

WHEREAS, Michael Maren worked tirelessly to improve educational opportunities for all children, and he was especially proud of his son, Brandon, who started college in the fall of 2023; and

WHEREAS, Michael Maren earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science from Middle Tennessee State University and a Master of Public Administration degree from Tennessee State University; and

WHEREAS, he proudly served his country in the United States Navy for seven years, during which time he was a submariner on the *USS Alaska*; and

WHEREAS, a member of the Corinthian Masonic Lodge #8, Michael Maren was an avid baseball fan and loved the University of Tennessee Volunteers, Miami Dolphins, and New York Yankees; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Maren is survived by his son, Brandon Maren; father, Tom (Barb) Maren; mother, Linda Anderson; sister, Lindsay (Jim) Chapman; half-sister, Stephanie Powers; stepsiblings, Mark (Lauren) Roder and Tiffany (Jarrod) Bunner; ex-wife, Crystal Maren; nieces and nephews, Lyliona Maren, Vivian Bunner, Gabrielle Bunner, Brooklyn Chapman, James Chapman, and Dominic Chapman; and his beloved canine companion, Nessie; and

WHEREAS, Michael will be missed tremendously by his countless friends who considered him family and who are determined to carry on his legacy; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we should memorialize the bountiful life of our friend and colleague; 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 Michael "Mike" Maren, reflecting fondly upon his many contributions to education policy in Tennessee and his legacy as a public servant.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and extend our condolences to Mr. Maren's family, colleagues, and many friends.

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.