

SENATE RESOLUTION 75

By Berke

A RESOLUTION to confirm the appointment of Tom Griscom of Chattanooga to the Tennessee Board of Regents.

WHEREAS, Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-8-201, provides for the creation of the Board of Regents; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-8-201, further provides that the Governor shall appoint fourteen members to the Board of Regents; and

WHEREAS, Governor Bill Haslam has appointed Tom Griscom of Chattanooga to a full six-year term as a member of the Board of Regents representing the Third Congressional District; and

WHEREAS, the retired former publisher and executive editor of the *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, Mr. Griscom dedicated much of his career to the communications profession; and

WHEREAS, a 1971 graduate of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC) with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English, Tom Griscom began his professional career as a reporter with the *Chattanooga Free Press*, honing his communications skills in Hamilton County until 1978, when he accepted the position of press secretary for U.S. Senator Howard Baker; and

WHEREAS, he quickly proved himself to be an invaluable aide to Senator Baker, and his responsibilities expanded into legislative strategy and office management, which led to his selection in 1985 to serve as executive director of the National Republican Senatorial Committee for the 1986 election cycle; and

WHEREAS, joining the private sector in 1987, Tom Griscom served in a senior management role for Ogilvy and Mather, a public affairs firm in Washington, D.C., before returning to government service later that year when he was named an Assistant to the President as the White House Communication Director under President Ronald Reagan; and

WHEREAS, in his capacity as White House Communication Director, Mr. Griscom oversaw speechwriting, scheduling, advance teams, media relations, public affairs and public liaison, and the press secretary's office; he directed the staff transition and coordinated two U.S. – Soviet Union summits; and

WHEREAS, returning to Tennessee in 1988, Tom Griscom became the first person to hold the West Chair of Communication at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and designed the focus of the chair and its integration across multi-disciplines; in addition to teaching classes at his alma mater, he organized public policy forums for students and the community; and

WHEREAS, in 1990, Mr. Griscom accepted a position with R.J. Reynolds where he served as an executive vice president responsible for public relations, public affairs, and state and federal government relations, overseeing a staff of 130 with an annual budget in excess of \$30 million; and

WHEREAS, after a short tenure with News Corporation as an executive vice president and a period with Powell Tate as a senior advisor on client public affairs, Tom Griscom returned to the *Chattanooga Times Free Press* in 1999 when he was named publisher and executive editor; and

WHEREAS, Tom Griscom oversaw the expansion of the *Chattanooga Times Free Press'* coverage into a twelve-county region, multi-state region as well as the development of new sections that focused on entertainment, sports, and young readers, and received national recognition from the distinguished *Editor & Publisher*; and

WHEREAS, the 2007 recipient of the UTC Distinguished Alumnus Award, Mr. Griscom has served ably on numerous civic and charitable boards, including the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce, Allied Arts, The Community Resource Council, Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprises, the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Bicentennial Library, University of Tennessee Development Council, Howard Baker Center of Public Policy, Tennessee Open Government Coalition, president of the Tennessee Press Association, and the University of Chattanooga Foundation; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Griscom's educational and professional experience would be a tremendous asset to the Board of Regents; and

WHEREAS, Tom Griscom is a person of integrity and an active citizen whose benevolence, acumen, and strong commitment to public service have helped to enhance the well being of this state and its citizens; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-8-201, provides that each member appointed by the governor to the Board of Regents shall be subject to confirmation by the Senate; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that this body does hereby confirm the appointment of Tom Griscom to the Board of Regents for a term to expire on May 31, 2017.