

SENATE RESOLUTION 133

By Harper

A RESOLUTION to commend Dr. Elma Hubbard Mardis for her honorable and astute service to the Memphis Housing Authority.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this legislative body should specially recognize those estimable public servants who have dedicated themselves to improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Elma Hubbard Mardis has served the citizens of Memphis with integrity and honor since 1992 as a member of the Memphis Housing Authority (MHA); and

WHEREAS, a native Memphian, Dr. Elma Mardis was first appointed to the Memphis Housing Authority by Mayor W.W. Herenton and was reappointed by Mayor A.C. Wharton, Jr.; during her tenure, she has served as vice chair of the board and held several other offices; and

WHEREAS, during her illustrious time of service with MHA, Dr. Mardis brought a sense of purpose and connectivity by not only sharing her knowledge of the Memphis community and resources with the board members, but also by taking a personal interest in each and every facet of the agency; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mardis played a vital role in the transformation of public housing in the City of Memphis, becoming intricately involved in the building of several MHA properties, as the agency was awarded five HOPE VI grants that helped establish a new vision for public housing; and

WHEREAS, the properties redeveloped with HOPE VI grants included LeMoyne Gardens, now College Park; Hurt Village/Lauderdale Courts, now Uptown; Lamar Terrace, now University Place; Dixie Homes, now Legends Park; and Cleaborn Homes, now Cleaborn Pointe; the last grant received under the tenure of Dr. Mardis was a Choice Neighborhood Implementation grant for Foote Homes, which has become South City; and

WHEREAS, as a caring advocate and compassionate community leader, Dr. Elma Mardis remained a staple of influence and direction as changes to MHA occurred over the years, sharing her steady hand of guidance as the redevelopment of the last large traditional public housing site was completed; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Elma Mardis holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Education from LeMoyne-Owen College, a Master of Education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and a Doctorate in Education Administration and Supervision from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Elma Mardis was a longtime employee of Memphis City Schools, which she served in numerous capacities during her career, including mathematics teacher, director of the Title I program for Educationally Disadvantaged Students, and assistant director of Curriculum for Title III; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mardis also enjoyed a successful career in higher education, serving as an assistant professor and coordinator for the Bureau of Educational Research and Service at the West Tennessee Center at the University of Tennessee; assistant director for the Mid-Atlantic/Appalachian Race Desegregation Assistance Center at the University of Tennessee and a part-time instructor at Shelby State Community College; and

WHEREAS, her extensive career also includes service as the executive director of the City of Memphis Private Industry Council, director of the Memphis Urban League Computer Training Center, and national director of education for PUSH for Excellence, Inc., and work with a number of federal and local government agencies, including the United States Department of Labor, the City of Memphis, and Shelby County government; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mardis is a member of numerous professional organizations, including Phi Delta Kappa; Kappa Delta Pi; Pi Lambda Theta; Mid-South Educational Research Association; American Educational Research Association; Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development; Tennessee Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development; National Association of Black School Educators; and the Council for Basic Education; and

WHEREAS, she has lent her time and talents to numerous civic, charitable, and community organizations, including the Memphis Urban League; the NAACP; The LINKS, Inc.;

Girls Club of Memphis, Inc.; Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.; Jessie Mahan Daycare Center; Free the Children; Martin Luther King Center for the Performing Arts; United Way of Greater Memphis; and the Wife Abuse Crisis Center, to name but a few; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Dr. Mardis has received the PUSH for Excellence-Leadership Award, the Pacesetter Award, the Prominent Black Women Award, the Women of Distinction Gold Award, the Mertie Buckman Empowerment Award, and the Simply the Best Award, in addition to receiving numerous recognitions, including Outstanding Woman of Shelby County; and

WHEREAS, her many accomplishments aside, she is fortunate to share both love and companionship with her husband, William C. Mardis, and their daughter, Dr. Marlah H. Mardis; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Elma Mardis is wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the Volunteer State, and she should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we commend Dr. Elma Hubbard Mardis for her honorable and astute service to the Memphis Housing Authority and extend to her our best wishes for much continued success and happiness.

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