

1 State of Arkansas
2 93rd General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2021
4
5 By: Senator M. Johnson
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7 **SENATE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION**

8 TO REMEMBER STEVE STEPHENS AND TO HONOR HIS
9 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STATE OF ARKANSAS.
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11 **Subtitle**

12 TO REMEMBER STEVE STEPHENS AND TO HONOR
13 HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STATE OF
14 ARKANSAS.
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18 WHEREAS, Mr. Steve Stephens, the only son of Allie and Owen Stephens,
19 departed this life on Friday, January 29, 2021; and he was a life-long
20 Christian, baptized at fourteen (14) years old and taught Bible classes to
21 young people in high school; and
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23 WHEREAS, Mr. Stephens obtained his formal education at Newport High
24 School, Castle Heights Military Academy, and the University of Arkansas at
25 Fayetteville, where he was a member of Kappa Alpha Fraternity, but declared
26 his "rite of passage" into the brotherhood of man in the United States Marine
27 Corps; and as a decorated United States Marine Corps combat veteran, he
28 earned three (3) battle stars while serving with the famed 1st Marine
29 Division in Korea, was awarded the United States Marine Corps Expert
30 Rifleman's medal, and was discharged as a Sergeant of Marines; and
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32 WHEREAS, in 2007, Mr. Stephens and a select group of other former
33 United States Marines were flown by the Korean government to Seoul where the
34 President of the Republic of Korea awarded him and his comrades the
35 Presidential Peace Medal, naming them Ambassadors of Peace for their service
36 during the Korean Conflict; and his name is inscribed on the MacArthur Museum



1 of Arkansas Military History's Arsenal Walk and on the Arkansas Korean War
2 Veterans Memorial in MacArthur Park; and

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4 WHEREAS, Mr. Stephens had a distinguished Masonic history that lasted
5 over fifty (50) years after joining at the urging of his father, and earned
6 him the DeMolay Legion of Honor, the Rainbow Grand Cross of Color, and the
7 coveted 33rd degree; and

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9 WHEREAS, his historical favorites in life were Robert E. Lee, Winston
10 Churchill, and Ernest Hemingway, although his mother was indeed the strongest
11 influence in his life and was as "gentle as a dove and as brave as a lioness.
12 A true steel magnolia", he once said; and

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14 WHEREAS, throughout his lifetime, Mr. Stephens was known for his
15 distinctive voice that he used to narrate countless radio and television
16 commercials, film documentaries, and video tributes; he started in radio in
17 Newport, Arkansas, as "The Voice of The White River Valley" at KUBY; he was
18 later the host and producer of "Steve's Show", a popular television program
19 in the late 1950's and early 1960's that aired for almost a decade on the
20 Little Rock CBS affiliate, and which first announced Santa Claus flying into
21 the state on Christmas Eve as well as filming the first filmed tour of the
22 Governor's Mansion; and during his television career, Mr. Stephens was voted
23 "Arkansas's Top Television Personality; and

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25 WHEREAS, he left television to become United States Senator John
26 McClellan's special assistant in charge of media relations and later was
27 elected founding vice president of the United States Senate Press Secretaries
28 Association before returning to Arkansas and founding an advertising, public
29 relations, and travel agency; and

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31 WHEREAS, Mr. Stephens later became a licensed investment banking
32 principal, served as director of communications and later assistant to the
33 chairman of the board of Stephens Inc., and was named President of Stephens
34 Entertainment, Inc., in which he managed investments for various
35 entertainment figures; and

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1 WHEREAS, Mr. Stephens maintained an interest in many professional,
2 charitable, and community causes, including the founding of the Little Rock
3 Motion Picture and Television Commission, the Mayor's Commission on Tourism,
4 the Arkansas FBI Citizens Academy Foundation, the Arkansas Cancer Research
5 Center Foundation Board, and the Vision of Hope Society; chairing the Keep
6 Little Rock Beautiful Commission; creating newspaper columns; creating and
7 endowing the "Golden Mike" award at the University of Arkansas at Little
8 Rock; and becoming a member of the University of Arkansas Medical Sciences'
9 Chancellor's Circle; and

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11 WHEREAS, Mr. Stephens was inducted into the Arkansas Entertainers Hall
12 of Fame and the Arkansas Walk of Fame, and was later appointed and
13 reappointed to the Arkansas Entertainers' Hall of Fame Board by two (2)
14 Governors; and he received a Citation of Excellence in 2010 from the House of
15 Representatives that recognized his lifetime of achievement, and he loaned
16 his personal papers, mementos, and memorabilia that year to the Arkansas
17 Studies Institute; he had a book written about him entitled "Fate Has Been My
18 Friend – The Life and Times of Steve Stephens"; in 2018, he was honored by
19 the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Mid-America Chapter with
20 a lifetime achievement award honoring individuals who have represented the
21 very best of television and have made a significant contribution to
22 television; he was honored by a retrospective of his television and
23 broadcasting career by the Central Arkansas Library System in Little Rock; he
24 was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Humanities Degree from Southwestern College
25 in Oklahoma City; he was awarded the Jonas Salk Lifetime Achievement Award
26 for his fund-raising efforts on behalf of the Arkansas Chapter of the March
27 of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation and the International Council of the Salk
28 Institute, on whose international board he served for eleven (11) years; and
29 he served as an Honorary Life Trustee of the March of Dimes Foundation; and

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31 WHEREAS, being nothing if not a true renaissance man with an
32 adventurous spirit, each year he would attempt something different – he
33 rafted down the Colorado River; swam with sting rays in the Cayman Islands;
34 climbed the Great Wall of China with his grandson Owen; acted in a motion
35 picture; had dinner in the White House; lunched with Dr. Edward Teller, the
36 father of the hydrogen bomb; interviewed countless entertainment luminaries;

1 helped start a cellular phone business in Vietnam; hiked the Swiss Alps;
2 sailed the Aegean Sea through the Greek islands; realized a boyhood dream of
3 standing on the Acropolis in Greece and viewing the Parthenon; watched the
4 sunrise on the island of Bali; snorkeled in the Sea of Cortez; explored the
5 sacred home of the Navajo Nation in Monument Valley; enjoyed photography,
6 history, and tennis; and once rode in an eighteen-wheeler to the west coast,
7 all in his continuing search for the next adventure; and he celebrated his
8 75th birthday by parasailing with his twelve-year-old granddaughter Stephanie
9 in the Dominican Republic, his 78th birthday by helicoptering to a glacier in
10 Alaska to dogsled with his youngest grandson Seth, and his 79th birthday by
11 exploring with Seth Yellowstone National Park, Mount Rushmore, Little Bighorn
12 Battlefield, and floating the Snake River through the Grand Tetons; and
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14 WHEREAS, he had many friends and family who loved him for his wit,
15 generosity, and kindness; a friend of his once said, "Saying Steve loved life
16 is like saying Mother Teresa was a kind lady"; and Mr. Stephens often said
17 that "Life was meant to be enjoyed, not endured"; and
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19 WHEREAS, along with his parents, his son Stanton Owen preceded him in
20 death, and he is survived by his beloved son Steele; his four (4)
21 grandchildren, Owen, Sarah, Stephanie, and Seth; his three (3) great
22 grandsons, Owen Josef, Hudson Wyatt, and Jacob Peter; and his great-
23 granddaughter Georgia, all of whom loved their "Popi"; and he is also
24 survived by his daughter-in-law Sherry; his former daughter-in-law Megan; his
25 granddaughter-in-law Petra; and his treasured late-in-life partner, Belinda
26 Shults,
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28 NOW THEREFORE,

29 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
30 STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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32 THAT the Senate remember Mr. Steve Stephens and honor his contributions
33 to the State of Arkansas.
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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the individual members of the Senate hereby
36 express sincere condolences to the family of Mr. Steve Stephens, and upon

1 adoption of this resolution, an appropriate copy shall be provided to the
2 family of Mr. Stephens by the Secretary of the Senate.

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