

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 343

By Stevens

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Judge John Everett Williams of Huntingdon.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should honor the memory of those citizens who, through their extraordinary efforts, distinguished themselves as community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy person was Judge John Everett Williams, an outstanding jurist who faithfully discharged his duties on the bench for nearly twenty-five years before his untimely passing on September 2, 2022; and

WHEREAS, born on November 11, 1953, Judge Williams was the son of the late Betty Everett Williams and John L. Williams; and

WHEREAS, a 1971 graduate of Huntingdon High School, he earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from the University of Tennessee at Martin and received his Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from Cumberland School of Law at Samford University; and

WHEREAS, Judge John Everett Williams returned to Huntingdon in 1981 and practiced law with his father at Williams & Williams, Attorneys at Law, for seventeen years until his appointment to the Tennessee Court of Criminal Appeals by Governor Don Sundquist in 1998; and

WHEREAS, Judge Williams served with distinction on the bench of the Tennessee Court of Criminal Appeals; the presiding judge of the Court of Criminal Appeals beginning in 2018, he was also a strong advocate for the Tennessee Lawyers Assistance Program, for which he served as chair for a number of years; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his outstanding legal career, John Everett Williams was an amazing magician and longstanding member of the International Brotherhood of Magicians; countless children enjoyed his shows and affectionately referred to him as the "Magic Man"; and

WHEREAS, another of Judge Williams's hobbies and talents was acting; he especially enjoyed portraying Mark Twain and was actively involved with The Dixie Carter Performing Arts and Academic Enrichment Center; and

WHEREAS, an avid outdoorsman and fisherman, Judge John Everett Williams cherished his time with friends in the duck blind or on the Tennessee River; the enjoyment of the river, but especially Kentucky Lake, led him to purchase a lake house at Beaver Dam, where the little community became an all-important part of his life; and

WHEREAS, a gentleman who appreciated the importance of good citizenship, Judge Williams gave back to his community in countless ways, such as working with charitable organizations, providing labor, mentoring, providing substance abuse assistance, and volunteering as a counselor; he was part of Anonymous Village, a clean and sober camp at Burning Man, and most enjoyed his time volunteering with the Temple Guardians to help those who were dealing with the loss of a loved one; and

WHEREAS, left to cherish his memory are his son, John Everett (Devon) Williams II; brother, Bob (Donna) Williams; granddaughters, Emory Williams and Everly Williams; and nieces, Amelia Jordan and Caroline (William) Alexander; and

WHEREAS, Judge Williams exemplified the allegiance to equality and justice under the law that is characteristic of a true Tennessean and leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we should remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant 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 Judge John Everett Williams, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character, his extraordinary contributions to the

people of Tennessee, and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

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.