

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1387

By Taylor

A RESOLUTION to congratulate Richard K. "Rick" James on being named 2024 Retailer of the Year.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly recognize those individuals whose vision, ambition, and work ethic are driving forces behind the success of local economies and the economy of this State; and

WHEREAS, one such individual is Richard K. "Rick" James, who was recently named 2024 Retailer of the Year by the Tennessee Grocers and Convenience Store Association, a most befitting honor that recognizes his important contributions to the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the owner and chief executive officer of Castle Retail Group, LLC, a vital independent retail grocery company based in Memphis, Rick James has served at the highest levels of companies in the retail and wholesale tiers of Tennessee's food industry; and

WHEREAS, Mr. James began his illustrious career in food retail more than forty-seven years ago, when he entered the training program for the Kroger Company in Lexington, Kentucky, in 1977; he was quickly promoted to store manager in 1979; and

WHEREAS, in 1987, Rick James relocated to Memphis to work for grocery wholesaler Malone & Hyde, where he served as a retail consultant and an assistant advertising director; and

WHEREAS, after Malone & Hyde merged with two of its major customers, Mr. James became director of marketing for the newly formed Sewell-Allen company; and

WHEREAS, in 1992, he became president of Sewell-Allen, as well as a partner; at the peak of the company's growth, the firm served fifteen stores and employed more than 1,200 residents of the greater Memphis area; and

WHEREAS, Mr. James currently owns three Cash Saver stores, offering the highest possible value for customers in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, he also prevented the creation of an urban food desert when, on the announcement of a store closure by a large national grocery chain, Rick James purchased the property and turned it into a thriving community resource; and

WHEREAS, similarly, Mr. James assumed ownership of a beloved neighborhood gem, High Point Grocery, preserving its legacy for another generation; and

WHEREAS, in 2022, Rick James opened downtown Memphis's first full-service grocery store in decades, South Point Grocery, thereby increasing livability in the city's vital urban core; and

WHEREAS, his long and distinguished record of civic involvement includes serving on the Memphis City Schools Strategic Planning Task Group and on the board of directors of the Memphis in May International Festival, Shelby State Community College, and the Mid-South Food Bank; and

WHEREAS, a dedicated member of his profession, Mr. James serves on the board of directors of Piggly Wiggly Owners and Operations Association and as chairman of the Tennessee Grocers and Convenience Store Association; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to accolades, Rick James is a recipient of the prestigious Peace and Justice Center Award for Outstanding Accomplishments in Business; and

WHEREAS, throughout his many successes, Mr. James has enjoyed the love and support of his wife of thirty-six years, Cathy, and together they have raised five outstanding children: Sarah, Erick, Taylor, Adelyn, and Lauren, the three youngest of whom are active in the family business; and

WHEREAS, Rick James has devoted his career to providing superior service and improving the economic well-being of his fellow Tennesseans, and it is most fitting that he be recognized at this time; 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 congratulate Richard K. "Rick" James on being named 2024 Retailer of the Year by the Tennessee Grocers and Convenience Store Association, extending our best wishes for his continued success.

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.