

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 46

By Fitzhugh

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Harlan Mathews.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Harlan Mathews, who so ably served the good people of Tennessee in numerous capacities for more than forty years; and

WHEREAS, a public servant whose contributions will continue to impact Tennessee for generations to come, Harlan Mathews played an integral role in the fiscal stability and modernization of State government in Tennessee, serving officially under four governors and as a highly valued advisor to a fifth; and

WHEREAS, born on January 17, 1927, in Sumiton, Alabama, Mr. Mathews was educated in the public schools of Alabama and served with valor and bravery in the United States Navy from 1944 to 1946 as a member of this country's "Greatest Generation" during World War II; and

WHEREAS, upon his return, Mr. Mathews attended Jacksonville State College in Jacksonville, Alabama, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1949 and gaining recognition in *Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities*; and

WHEREAS, Harlan Mathews received a scholarship from Vanderbilt University and earned a Master of Arts degree in Public Administration from Vanderbilt in 1954. He then earned an LL.B. degree in 1962 from the Nashville School of Law, from which he received a Recognition Award; and

WHEREAS, as Mr. Mathews pursued his postgraduate work, he entered employment in Tennessee State government under Governor Gordon Browning as a budget analyst with the State Planning Office in 1950; he then became a top assistant to Governor Frank G. Clement, serving as the Deputy Director of the Tennessee Budget Staff from 1955 to 1960; and

WHEREAS, in 1960, Governor Clement appointed Harlan Mathews to the position of Commissioner of the Department of Finance and Administration, which he held throughout the Clement administration and Governor Buford Ellington's administration before stepping down in 1971, completing the longest tenure of any commissioner of that department to date; and

WHEREAS, leaving State government for several years, Mr. Mathews accepted the position of senior vice president of multi-family housing development for Amcon International Incorporated of Memphis in 1971 and would serve in that capacity until 1973; and

WHEREAS, returning to Nashville, Harlan Mathews served with distinction as a legislative assistant to State Comptroller William Snodgrass until March 21, 1974, when he was elected State Treasurer by Joint Convention of the 88th Tennessee General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, because of the General Assembly's trust in and respect for his abilities, Harlan Mathews would serve as State Treasurer of the State of Tennessee until 1987, at that time the longest term of service of any State Treasurer in Tennessee history; and

WHEREAS, as Treasurer, Harlan Mathews instituted a wide range of improvements to the Department of the Treasury, including the recruitment of more college graduates, implementation of professional development policies, and deployment of information systems to automate tasks; and

WHEREAS, under Mr. Mathews, Tennessee became the first state to invest its pension fund in international securities; the cash management program was enhanced to ensure that State bank deposits received a current rate of interest; and the Local Government Investment Pool was established; and

WHEREAS, in improving State government operations, Harlan Mathews led the implementation of the Unclaimed Property and the Deferred Compensation programs, played a key role in the development of legislation establishing the Tennessee Claims Commission, and presided over the implementation of 1972 legislation that consolidated seven preexisting, underfunded retirement systems into the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System; and

WHEREAS, he also led the expansion of the Treasury Information Systems, the formation of actuarially based funding for the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System, and

the creation of the Chairs of Excellence program within the Tennessee Board of Regents and the University of Tennessee systems; and

WHEREAS, in 1987, Governor Ned McWherter appointed Mr. Mathews as his Deputy Governor and Cabinet Secretary, where he served for six years as chief advisor to the Governor for Policy and Personnel issues; and

WHEREAS, a close confidant and personal friend of Governor McWherter, Harlan Mathews was the “Governor’s ear,” acting as a buffer between the Governor and issues and problems arising in the course of State government, a task he unfailingly handled with tact and diplomacy; and

WHEREAS, when United States Senator Albert Gore Jr. was elected Vice President, Governor McWherter appointed Mr. Mathews to serve out the unexpired term; he was sworn in as a U.S. Senator on January 3, 1993, and served as a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, the Rules and Administration Committee, and the Joint Committee on Printing, and the Vice Chairman of the Subcommittee on Mineral Resources Development and Production; and

WHEREAS, returning to Tennessee in 1994, Mr. Mathews joined the law firm of Farris Mathews Bobango, where he focused on areas of governmental relations, administrative law, and health care, and remained active in the legislature and politics, including serving as an informal advisor and fundraiser for Governor Phil Bredesen; and

WHEREAS, one of the most influential men in Tennessee State government over the last half-century, Mr. Mathews mentored and inspired countless government officials and State employees with his keen insight, analytical ability, and attention to detail, earning their respect and admiration; and

WHEREAS, Harlan Mathews enjoyed the loving companionship of his beloved wife, Patsy Jones Mathews. He was the proud father of devoted sons Stanley Mathews (Sandy) and Lester Mathews, and the beloved grandfather of treasured granddaughters Katie Zipper and Emily Mathews, and he was preceded in death by his son Richard Mathews; and

WHEREAS, committed to the highest ideals of public service, Harlan Mathews 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 this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being, whose unparalleled contributions to the government and citizens of Tennessee stand as a monument to a job well done; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Harlan Mathews, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Mathews.

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