

SENATE RESOLUTION 27

By Jackson

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Lester Martin Bates of Maury City.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Lester Martin Bates; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bates was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, born in Crockett County on May 5, 1922, to Otis Martin Bates and Ettie Edna Rice Bates, Lester Bates was the eldest of six children; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of Hamlett-Robinson High School in Crockett Mills, he was drafted into the United States Army in 1942. While in the Army, he received training as a radio operator and eventually became a medical aid man for the 752nd Anti-Aircraft Battalion; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bates served in some of the most famous battles of World War II, including the Battle of Saipan and the Battle of Iwo Jima. As a testament to his bravery, he received two Bronze Stars, the Asiatic Pacific Service Medal, a Good Conduct Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal, and he eventually earned the rank of Tech 4 Sergeant; and

WHEREAS, after three years away from home, Lester Bates returned to Crockett County and married Marjorie Greene on December 19, 1945. They moved to Memphis, and he attended Memphis State University and pharmacy school at the University of Tennessee on the GI Bill; and

WHEREAS, after pharmacy school, Mr. and Mrs. Bates moved to Maury City and had three children. Two of their children, Olivia Bates Chandler and Barry Lester Bates, followed in their father's footsteps and became pharmacists, and one, Dr. Richard Greene Bates, is a medical doctor; and

WHEREAS, determined to continue his education, Mr. Bates graduated from Massey Technical Institute in 1968; and

WHEREAS, a successful entrepreneur, Mr. Bates owned Bates' Corner Drug in Bells and City Drug Co. in Maury City, and he retired from pharmacy after fifty years in the business; and

WHEREAS, serving faithfully as an elder for fifty-two years, Lester Bates was an active and devout member of the Maury City Church of Christ since 1952. In addition, he led the singing and taught classes for more than forty years; and

WHEREAS, a dedicated leader, Mr. Bates served Maury City and Crockett County as a city recorder from 1954 to 1955 and as mayor from 1957 to 1961 and 1973 to 1978. While mayor, he acquired two factories that employed 150 people, installed the city's first water system, and obtained its first fire truck; and

WHEREAS, Lester Bates was the first charter president for the Maury City Ruritan Club, a Charter Board member for the Crockett County Chamber of Commerce, the director of the West Tennessee Industrial Board, a member of the Crockett County Industrial Board, and the president of the West Tennessee Pharmaceutical Association; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bates also worked for the Boy Scouts of America and the American Cancer Society, and, at the age of ninety-two, he helped upgrade the Maury City Cemetery; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to accolades, he was nominated by three different clubs for the Man of the Year Award in Crockett County, and former governor Lamar Alexander made him an Honorary Colonel of the Governor's Staff; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bates was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Lester Bates 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; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor the memory of Lester Martin Bates, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction, and express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Bates.

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