

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 193

By Carr

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Donald and Alicia Blankenship on receiving the 2009 Young Farmer and Rancher Achievement Award from the American Farm Bureau Federation.

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

WHEREAS, two such noteworthy people are Donald and Alicia Blankenship of Murfreesboro, who recently received the 2009 Young Farmer and Rancher Achievement Award from the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF); and

WHEREAS, this great honor, awarded for demonstrating exceptional knowledge of and achievement in agriculture, as well as a commitment to promoting the agricultural industry, was announced January 12, 2009, at the AFBF's ninetieth annual meeting, held in San Antonio; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the recognition and publicity that attends this award, Mr. and Mrs. Blankenship received a 2009 Dodge Ram 3500 pickup truck, courtesy of Dodge, a one-thousand-dollar voucher from Valvoline, and free registration to the 2009 AFBF Young Farmer and Rancher Leadership Conference, held February 7-9 in Sacramento; and

WHEREAS, participants in the competition for the award are evaluated on the growth and financial progress of their respective agricultural operations, Farm Bureau leadership, and leadership outside the Farm Bureau; and

WHEREAS, Donald and Alicia Blankenship live near Murfreesboro on a 1,490-acre farm, where they maintain four hundred acres of row crops, one thousand acres of pasture and hay, and twenty acres of vegetables; and

WHEREAS, they also own 190 brood cows, selling replacement heifers and back-grounding their calves before marketing at eight hundred pounds; Mr. Blankenship is a Certified Master Beef Producer and a member of the Tennessee Cattlemen's Association; and

WHEREAS, additionally, the Blankenships sell straw, corn stalks, and over 21,000 pumpkins every year as fall decorations; Mr. Blankenship also raises 540 acres of orchard grass and timothy hay and over thirty acres of Bermuda hay, to bring his total to over forty thousand bales produced per year; and

WHEREAS, a distinguished leader in the Farm Bureau, Mr. Blankenship is a member of the Rutherford County Farm Bureau Board of Directors, and he has also served the Tennessee Farm Bureau as a member of the Resolutions Committee; and

WHEREAS, deeply committed to the Bureau's Young Farmer program, Mr. Blankenship has served as Young Farmer County Chairman, District Young Farmer Vice Chairman, and at the state level, Tennessee Young Farmer Vice Chairman, Treasurer, and Safety Chairman; and

WHEREAS, outside of the bureau, he has been a leader in agriculture as well; Donald Blankenship has been a member of the Farm Credit Services of Mid-America Board of Directors and served as Alpha Gamma Rho Alumni Treasurer for the Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) chapter; and

WHEREAS, he has served as Future Farmers Chapter President and Delta Tau Alpha Chapter President, and he has been a member of the 4-H Volunteer Leaders and the Storm Water Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, he has also served as Secretary-Treasurer of Mid-States Produce and a member of the Farmers Co-op, the Lebanon Advisory Committee, and the 2007 Nominating Committee; and

WHEREAS, Donald Blankenship earned his Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness from MTSU; Alicia Blankenship attended MTSU as well, earning a Bachelor of Science there, and she also obtained a master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Mr. Blankenship attended the Tennessee Governor's School and has received the Tennessee Young Farmer Environmental Stewardship Award; and

WHEREAS, thanks to the work of men and women such as Donald and Alicia Blankenship, Tennessee's farms and ranches enjoy a reputation for exceptional quality and productivity, and for their many contributions to this reputation, the Blankenships should be applauded; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and congratulate Donald and Alicia Blankenship on receiving the 2009 Young Farmer and Rancher Achievement Award from the American Farm Bureau Federation, thank them for their meritorious service to the State of Tennessee, and extend to them our best wishes for every future success.

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