

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 498

By Cobb T

A RESOLUTION to name a bridge on State Route 246 in Maury County in honor of the late Alexander Patton Sparkman.

WHEREAS, from time to time, the members of this General Assembly have seen fit to name certain highways and bridges to honor those exemplary public servants who, during their lifetimes, contributed significantly to the growth and prosperity of their respective communities; and

WHEREAS, no Tennessean is more deserving of this honor than the late Alexander Patton Sparkman, who was affectionately known by his friends, neighbors, and colleagues in the wholesale business as "Mr. L." and who was one of Maury County's finest citizens; and

WHEREAS, few people have touched as many lives as Mr. Sparkman, a gentleman who attained excellence both as a public servant and a human being; and

WHEREAS, Alexander Patton Sparkman ran the grocery store in the Beech Grove community of Maury County from 1925 until his death in 1961; and

WHEREAS, Mr. L. became a mainstay of that community by supplying a complete line of groceries, livestock feed, hardware, coal for the winter heating, print material for ladies' dresses, shoes for men, and many other items; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Sparkman was an elder of the Beech Grove Church of Christ for many years, also serving as treasurer and taking care of church property; and

WHEREAS, during the lean years from the 1930's through the 1950's, he would generously carry the debt of sharecroppers on his books from the time the sharecroppers sold their tobacco in December until they sold their next crop the following December, and he carried many other debts on his books for thirty-day periods; and

WHEREAS, in the 1950's, Mr. L. helped two young ladies of his community attend and complete nursing school and helped one young man travel out west to follow the wheat harvest; and

WHEREAS, he and Mrs. Sparkman were blessed with four boys and two girls who all became solid citizens and followed his work ethic; and

WHEREAS, from 1936 until the mid 1940's, Mr. L. ran a peddling truck six days per week to help those people who had difficulty traveling to his store; he also had a livestock truck in which he carried farmers' livestock to the markets and hauled grain from the farmers to the various mills; and

WHEREAS, Mr. L. loved sports and sponsored a baseball team that played other community teams on Saturday afternoons; he was a kind and generous man who is still greatly missed by his friends and family; and

WHEREAS, the Maury County Commission has petitioned this Body to name a certain bridge located near his former store in the Beech Grove community to honor Mr. Sparkman's memory and to permanently commemorate his bountiful life of purpose and commitment to the greater good; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly concurs with this excellent proposal; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that the bridge (Bridge No. 60-246-6.59) on State Route 246 that spans Carters Creek just north of the Sparkman's store building in the Beech Grove community in Maury County is hereby designated the "L. Sparkman Memorial Bridge" in honor of the late Alexander Patton Sparkman, an accomplished public servant and even finer human being.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Department of Transportation is directed to erect suitable signs or to affix suitable markers designating the bridge described in the first resolving clause as the "L. Sparkman Memorial Bridge".

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the erection of such signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall become operative only if the federal Highway Administrator advises the Commissioner of Transportation in writing that the provisions of this resolution shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall become operative only if the cost of the manufacture and installation of such signs is paid to the department of transportation by Maury County within one (1) year of the effective date of this resolution. Such payment shall be made prior to any expenditure by the state for the manufacture or installation of such signs. The department shall return any unused portion of the estimated cost to Maury County within thirty (30) days of the erection of such signs. If the actual cost exceeds the estimated cost, an amount equal to the difference in such costs shall be remitted to the department by Maury County within thirty (30) days of the county receiving an itemized invoice of the actual cost from the department.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an enrolled copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Commissioner of Transportation.