

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 722

By Evans

A RESOLUTION to congratulate Robert Whitaker upon receiving the White House Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year Award.

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

WHEREAS, one such estimable individual is Robert Whitaker, who is the 2012 winner of the White House Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year Award; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Whitaker is an astute and dedicated community leader who has earned the respect of his peers and the citizens he serves for the exemplary quality of his work; and

WHEREAS, Robert Whitaker was born prematurely on April 12, 1947, in Nashville, the first child and only son of Joseph and Wynell Whitaker; and

WHEREAS, weighing only three and a half pounds at birth, Robert was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy and, due to this condition, he was unable to stand or walk as a growing child typically would; and

WHEREAS, however, at the age of eight, Robert walked for the first time with the assistance of crutches and a cane, an amazing accomplishment which opened the door for him to begin attending public school at White House Elementary; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Whitaker grew up in a house with four sisters and, despite his obstacles in life, he still took on the role of the big brother and was very protective of his younger sisters; and

WHEREAS, at age eleven, Robert's most extensive surgery was performed and he was required to wear a body brace and be homeschooled for the duration of his fourth grade year; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Whitaker returned to White House Elementary in fifth grade and, throughout school he made many lifelong friends, graduating from White House High School in 1967; and

WHEREAS, he attended Tennessee Technological Center of Nashville, from which he graduated with an associate's degree in office equipment repair; and

WHEREAS, after college in 1970, Robert Whitaker began working for The Farmers Bank in the bookkeeping department, serving the bank with acumen and alacrity for forty years and almost never missing a day of work during his estimable tenure; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Whitaker's physical challenge is something he has never acknowledged as a hindrance; his father made hand controls so that Robert could learn to drive and, in 1973, he was able to purchase his first car, and in October 1982, he purchased his first home in White House on Wilkinson Lane; and

WHEREAS, although Robert has never married or had children of his own, he is the proud uncle to nine nieces and nephews and eight great-nieces and great-nephews, all of whom consider him to be the greatest uncle ever; and

WHEREAS, over the years, Mr. Whitaker has opened his home to friends and family in need and has inspired others to never give up; his incredible attitude and independent nature have made him a hero to all who are fortunate to know him; and

WHEREAS, the greater White House community and the State of Tennessee are undoubtedly better places to live because of the life and service of Robert Whitaker; and

WHEREAS, the success of the State of Tennessee, the strength of our communities, and the overall vitality of our society depend, in great measure, on the dedication of people like Mr. Whitaker who use their considerable talents and resources to serve others; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud Robert Whitaker for his many contributions to the good people of Tennessee, his unwavering commitment to others, and his astute leadership in White House; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor Robert Whitaker upon receiving the White House Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year Award, commend his outstanding record of volunteerism, leadership, and community spirit, and extend to him our best wishes for every continued success and much happiness in all his future endeavors.

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