

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 498

By Overbey

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Michael L. Rawlings of Sevierville.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective well-being, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, thousands of Tennesseans continue this time-honored tradition through service as firefighters; and

WHEREAS, these individuals daily face the rigors of corporal imperilment in protecting those whom they so selflessly serve; and

WHEREAS, Sevierville Fire Chief Michael "Mike" L. Rawlings was one such outstanding public servant, and the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of his untimely death; and

WHEREAS, born and raised in Sevierville, Chief Rawlings rendered sterling service to his country in the United States Marine Corps before beginning his distinguished career as a volunteer firefighter with the Sevierville Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, this intrepid individual served with distinction as a firefighter for nearly four decades, consistently battling the inferno with no thought of personal safety in his fearless efforts to distinguish the flames and rescue the endangered civilians; and

WHEREAS, calm and courageous even under the most trying conditions, this dedicated and thoughtful leader expertly led those under his command with unflinching valor as their Fire Chief since 1994; and

WHEREAS, under his astute guidance, the department experienced extraordinary growth and development, including the addition of a second station on Collier Drive; and

WHEREAS, dearly loved by all who knew him and a friend and mentor to many, Chief Rawlings placed unprecedented emphasis on contingency training, ensuring that the brave men and women of the Sevierville Fire Department were among the most highly trained, equipped, and organized of any department in the State; and

WHEREAS, equal to his courage and sense of duty was his deep devotion to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Chief Rawlings enjoyed the love and companionship of his wife, Cindy Keeble Rawlings, with whom he treasured many years of martial bliss; and

WHEREAS, he was the proud father and father-in-law of Lynn and Patty Jo Rawlings and Christopher Rawlings and the doting grandfather of Garrett and Rylie Jo Rawlings and Cade Price; and

WHEREAS, Mike Rawlings will also be sorely missed by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lynn Porter Rawlings; his brother and sister-in-law, Mark W. and Helen Rawlings; his sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Carole and Robert Hubble; as well as a host of friends, family, and loved ones; and

WHEREAS, Mike Rawlings 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 SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Michael L. Rawlings, 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. Rawlings.

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