

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 533

By Green

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Judge William R. "Bill" Baker of Ashland City.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Judge William R. Baker; and

WHEREAS, Judge Baker was an exemplary jurist and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Judge Baker graduated from McCallie School in Chattanooga before continuing his education at Vanderbilt, where he received both his Bachelor of Arts and Doctor of Jurisprudence; and

WHEREAS, he served as a Foreign Service officer of the U.S. Department of State from 1956-1959 in northern Brazil; and

WHEREAS, following his tenure abroad, he opened a private law practice through which he served the people of Ashland City for 36 years; and

WHEREAS, Judge Baker served both his city and his state in a variety of legal roles, including City Attorney, General Sessions Judge, Ashland City Municipal Judge, secretary-treasurer of the Tennessee General Sessions Judges Conference, Cheatham County Commissioner, and he served in the 1965 Tennessee Constitutional Convention; and

WHEREAS, he was appointed to the Tennessee Claims Commission, a court for lawsuits over Tennessee from 1999-2004; he served as Chairman of the commission, and his jurisdiction covered 42 counties; and

WHEREAS, dedicated to the growth and betterment of his local community in Cheatham County beyond his official capacity, Judge Baker held a variety of civic positions, including President of the Cheatham County Chamber of Commerce, Chairman of the Cheatham County

Industrial Development Board, member of the city and county planning commissions, Chairman of the zoning-appeals board, and Republican Party County Chairman; and

WHEREAS, Judge Baker was also an active member of the wider Tennessee community, sitting as Boy Scouts District Chairman and taking part in the Republican State Executive Committee; and

WHEREAS, Judge William R. Baker was an active and devout member of the St. Martha's Catholic Church in Ashland City church, which he joined when he converted to Catholicism in 1988; and

WHEREAS, he became an active member of the Catholic community after his conversion, and he became deeply involved in many Catholic organizations; he served as a member of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, was a fourth-degree Knight of Columbus, and was a supernumerary of Opus Dei; and

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

WHEREAS, Judge Baker was preceded in death by his wife, Glover Dale Tarver Baker; and

WHEREAS, he is survived by his daughter, Sister Margaret Andrew Baker, OP, and his son, Father John Sims Baker; and

WHEREAS, Judge Baker 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 EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Judge William R. Baker, 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 Judge Baker.

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