

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 102

By Coley

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Wanda Wilson,
legendary proprietress of P&H Café in Memphis.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Wanda Wilson of Memphis, a tried and true, and most unique, Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, Wanda Wilson was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional, who turned the cozy, dark confines of the P&H Café at 1532 Madison into a favorite watering hole for people who were influential, intellectual, or in search of friendship and refreshment; and

WHEREAS, the environment of the P&H Café was eclectic, which suited the avant-garde clientele Ms. Wilson loved and served. Artists, authors, actors, academicians, filmmakers, musicians, journalists, politicians, lawyers, judges, dancers, private detectives, and local celebrities frequented her place, where she offered cold brew, warm words, a sympathetic ear, a tart tongue, limitless patience, and sincere interest in the work and worries of their daily lives; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Wilson was born and raised in Parsons. As a young adult, she moved to Memphis ostensibly to attend college; however, she soon became employed at the P&H Café. She purchased the café in the mid-1970s, sold it in 1999, and carried on presiding over the establishment's proceedings for many more years; and

WHEREAS, her trademark in life was her eccentricity, and she closely guarded the secret of her age just as vividly as she concealed the natural appearance of her hair under her signature flamboyant wigs and hats; and

WHEREAS, described as a woman of distinctive gypsy glamour, she thrived on the exuberance and passion of her artistic colleagues in her everyday walk through life. To her delight, she became a central figure in several paintings and plays that flowed from the palettes

and pens of her adoring P&H customers, and she was an ardent supporter of the theatres throughout Memphis; and

WHEREAS, she endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order, and will be sorely missed by her daughter, Julia White; her sister, Brenda Blaine; her brother, Darryl Gurley; and her three grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Wanda Wilson leaves behind an indelible legacy of grace and style, hospitality and friendship, and unfettered courage to live life without pause or regret. She was dedicated to eccentricity, and flamboyance gave rhythm to her heart, qualities which shall be the backdrop against which she will be remembered and celebrated; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Wanda Wilson, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character and her 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 and friends of Ms. Wilson.

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