

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 269

By Brooks K

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Hardwick Clothes, Inc. as they celebrate “Hardwick Clothes, Inc. Day” in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should recognize those exemplary businesses and their remarkable employees who, through their unwavering commitment to excellence, are a credit to this State; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable organization that evinces the greatest integrity and probity in all its chosen endeavors is Hardwick Clothes, Inc., America’s oldest maker of tailored clothing; and

WHEREAS, the company, originally called Cleveland Woolen Mills, was founded in 1880 in Cleveland by C. L. Hardwick, John Craigmiles, John Parker, P. B. Mayfield, and Creed Bates; and

WHEREAS, for the first half of the twentieth century, Hardwick Mills was one of the largest manufacturers of wool fabric and men’s clothing in the world; and

WHEREAS, in the 1920s, Hardwick evolved into a vertical operation, weaving the wool yarn at one end of the factory and assembling garments at the other; and

WHEREAS, in the 1940s, Hardwick Woolen Mills contributed to the war effort by manufacturing uniforms for the military; and

WHEREAS, in the 1950s, Hardwick Mills sold its woolen operations to focus on the men’s tailored clothing market and was rebranded as Hardwick Clothes, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, Hardwick once again modernized its operation in 1974, moving from its original Church Street factory to a new, 175,000 sq. ft. manufacturing plant on the outskirts of

Cleveland. The expansive new facility and modernized manufacturing equipment helped Hardwick stay competitive against an increasing supply of cheap, offshore clothing; and

WHEREAS, Hardwick's reputation for American-made quality has helped the company survive in the face of outsourcing and cost-cutting, which led Hardwick to contract with a wide range of national clients, such as the U.S. military and Major League Baseball; and

WHEREAS, in June 2014, the company was acquired by Allan Jones, a prominent Cleveland entrepreneur who committed to an increased investment in the company to help it regain its rightful status at the summit of the American clothing industry; and

WHEREAS, in July 2014, Bruce Bellusci was named chief executive officer/president, becoming the ninth person to hold such positions in the company's history; and

WHEREAS, for more than 130 years, Hardwick Clothes, Inc., proudly "Sewn in the South," has endured factory fires, economic recessions, two World Wars, inflation, and leisure suits. Despite these challenges, Hardwick Clothes continued to produce unsurpassed suits, pants, and jackets for men and women, operating successfully with pride and quality; and

WHEREAS, Hardwick Clothes, Inc. celebrates its resurgence as an employer of 240 Tennesseans and a manufacturer of exquisite men's suits made with top-quality fabrics and meticulous attention to detail that surpass anything offered by other clothing manufacturers here in the States; and

WHEREAS, Hardwick Clothes, Inc. is most assuredly worthy of this General Assembly's recognition and approbation; 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 hereby honor and commend the management and employees, both past and present, of Hardwick Clothes, Inc. for their tireless dedication to making quality products and join them as they celebrate April 15, 2015, as "Hardwick Clothes, Inc. Day" in Tennessee, extending to them our best wishes for every continued success in all their 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.