

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 414

By Overbey

A RESOLUTION to recognize Tennessee Supreme Court Justice Gary R. Wade on the occasion of his retirement from the bench.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor those jurists who have performed with uncommon devotion and probity throughout their years on the bench; and

WHEREAS, Supreme Court Justice Gary R. Wade is one such individual, who, in September 2015, retired from the Tennessee Supreme Court, ending an illustrious judicial career that spanned twenty-eight years; and

WHEREAS, a native of Knox County, Justice Wade graduated from the University of Tennessee in 1970 and earned his Juris Doctorate in 1973 from the University of Tennessee College of Law before entering the legal profession; and

WHEREAS, in private practice from 1973 to 1987, but drawn to public service, he served as the city attorney for Pigeon Forge from 1973 to 1987, during which time he was also elected Mayor of Sevierville, where he served from 1977 until 1987; and

WHEREAS, Justice Gary Wade began his judicial career in 1987, when he was appointed to the Court of Criminal Appeals; he served on the court for the next nineteen years and held the position of Presiding Judge from 1998 until 2006; and

WHEREAS, appointed to the Tennessee Supreme Court on May 30, 2006, by Governor Phil Bredesen, the Honorable Gary Wade upheld the highest tenets of the law while standing as a beacon of unwavering dedication to judicial excellence during his tenure on that august body, which included a two-year term as chief justice from 2012 to 2014; and

WHEREAS, a Fellow of the Tennessee Bar Foundation, Justice Wade served with distinction on the Tennessee Sentencing Commission from 1990 to 1994 and rendered sterling

service as president and executive committee member of the Tennessee Judicial Conference;  
and

WHEREAS, Justice Gary Wade is the founder of the Tennessee Judicial Conference Foundation, a charitable organization that offers need-based scholarships to students at each of Tennessee's six law schools; and

WHEREAS, during his illustrious legal career, Justice Wade has been a member of the Tennessee Bar Association, the American Bar Association, the Tennessee Trial Lawyers Association, the Tennessee Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, and the American Inns of Court; and

WHEREAS, he also dedicates his time and energies to a number of community and civic organizations, including the Friends of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, of which he was a co-founder and president; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, the Honorable Gary Wade received the Tennessee Bar Association Frank F. Drowota III Outstanding Judicial Service Award in 2014, Appellate Judge of the Year from the Southeastern Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates in 2004, the Judicial Excellence Award from the Knoxville Bar Association in 2004, the East Tennessee Regional Leadership Award in 2006, and the United States Department of Interior Citizens Award for Exceptional Service in 2007; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable career, Justice Wade has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of members of the bench and the bar alike; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we extend to Justice Gary R. Wade our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement from the bench and every continued success in 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.