

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 52

By Cooper

A RESOLUTION to recognize MSNBC, Chris Hayes, Trymaine Lee, and the production team of *All In with Chris Hayes* for their feature on African-American women elected officials in Shelby County.

WHEREAS, 2018 was a historic year for women in politics; nationally, women broke records for the number of candidates for governor, the U.S. House of Representatives, and the U.S. Senate; and

WHEREAS, not only did more women run for office than ever before, a record number of women were elected; a historic 102 female Representatives and twenty-four female Senators will comprise the 116<sup>th</sup> United States Congress; and

WHEREAS, individual women candidates also achieved historic firsts: Democrats Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib became the first Muslim women elected to Congress; Republican Marsha Blackburn became Tennessee's first female Senator; Democrats Deb Haaland and Sharice Davids became the first Native American women elected to Congress; and Republican Kristi Noem became South Dakota's first female governor; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee saw a record number of female candidates at the state level this year, with forty-seven women running for seats in the Senate and House of Representatives and sixteen being elected, including three African-American Senators—Raumesh Akbari, Brenda Gilmore, and Katrina Robinson—which is a first in the history of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Senator-elect Akbari and Senator-elect Robinson represent districts in Shelby County, which recently received recognition for its significant number of African-American women elected to office; of the twenty African-American women who won election to local or statewide offices in Shelby County in 2018, eight were featured on MSNBC's *All In With Chris Hayes* as part of a larger look at the increasing number of women entering politics; and

WHEREAS, in addition to Senator-elect Akbari and Senator-elect Robinson, the interview, which was conducted by journalist Trymaine Lee and held at the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, included Shelandra Ford, Register of Deeds; Temiika Gipson, Circuit Court Clerk; Michelle McKissack, School Board Commissioner; Wanda Halbert, Shelby County Clerk; State Representative Barbara Cooper; and Representative-elect London Lamar, as well as Danielle Inez, Campaign Manager for Shelby County Mayor-elect Lee Harris; and

WHEREAS, during the segment, the women spoke to Mr. Lee of bringing "Black Girl Magic" into politics; they credited the success of their campaigns to galvanizing young people by going out into the community and speaking with people one-on-one; and

WHEREAS, the interview aired numerous times and reached countless individuals throughout this State and nation as well as internationally, enabling these African-American women leaders from Shelby County to serve as ambassadors of the recent wave of females in the United States who have answered the call to serve their country through elected office; and

WHEREAS, other African-American women elected in Shelby County who were not interviewed include Shante Avant, School Board Member; Yolanda Kight, Circuit Court Judge; Jenniffer Johnson Mitchell, Criminal Court Judge; Tami Sawyer, County Commissioner; Jasmine Boyd, State Executive Committeewoman; Allison Brownlee, State Executive Committeewoman; Joyce Dorse-Coleman, School Board Member; Janis Fullilove, Juvenile Court Clerk; Marinda A. Williams, State Executive Committeewoman; and Karen Camper, State Representative; and

WHEREAS, though much work remains to be done, 2018 was a banner year for women in politics and is hopefully a herald of more to come; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we commend MSNBC, Chris Hayes, Trymaine Lee, and the production team of *All In With Chris Hayes* for highlighting the 2018 African-American women elected State

and local officials of Shelby County, extending our gratitude for their diligence in reporting the stories that are important to the citizens of this State and nation.

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