

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 282

By Camper

A RESOLUTION to recognize John McFerren upon his receipt of the 2019 Memphis Living Legend Award.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should specially recognize those estimable individuals who have dedicated their time and energies toward enhancing the quality of life in their communities; and

WHEREAS, one such individual is John McFerren, who recently received the 2019 Memphis Living Legend Award in recognition of the leadership and service he has provided to the good people of Shelby County; and

WHEREAS, a pioneer of African-American voter rights, Mr. McFerren led the 1959 effort for African-American voter registration in Fayette County, which effort resulted in a coalition of Fayette County African-American residents who dedicated themselves to advancing the cause of civil rights for decades thereafter; and

WHEREAS, this push for civil rights sparked outrage from the larger community, who evicted tenants and refused service at grocery stores; African-American landowners then allowed the displaced families to live on their land in tents; and

WHEREAS, in response to the Fayette County community's backlash against the integration movement, Mr. McFerren opened a grocery store to serve the many displaced tenants, and he wrote to large newspapers to raise awareness of the treatment of African Americans in the county. His activism resulted in a United States Department of Justice investigation into the events and, ultimately, the first lawsuit in the nation filed under the 1957 Civil Rights Act; and

WHEREAS, Mr. McFerren is an exemplary individual; his commitment to excellence and community service is representative of the Volunteer State, and he should be specially recognized; 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 honor and commend John McFerren upon his receipt of the 2019 Memphis Living Legend Award as we extend to him our best wishes for 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.