

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 512

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A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor the Honorable Deborah Means Henderson, Judge of Division IV, Shelby County General Sessions Court, Civil Division.

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

WHEREAS, one such individual is the Honorable Deborah Means Henderson, Judge of Division IV, Shelby County General Sessions Court, Civil Division, who has served with distinction in this capacity for nearly thirteen years; and

WHEREAS, a native Memphian, Judge Henderson graduated with honors from Central High School, thereafter attending Christian Brothers College, from which she graduated *cum laude* with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History; and

WHEREAS, in 1983, she earned her Juris Doctorate from the Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law at the University of Memphis; in 1990, she left her position at Delta Air Lines, Inc., as a reservations supervisor and began the private practice of law with the renowned law firm of Peete, Higgs and Armstrong; and

WHEREAS, during her sixteen-year career in private practice, Judge Deborah Henderson specialized in the areas of domestic relations, probate, and juvenile law; she served on the Juvenile Defender staff of the Juvenile Court of Memphis and Shelby County and as the first female and first minority Special Master of Shelby County's Chancery Court; and

WHEREAS, Judge Henderson was appointed by Governor Don Sundquist to the Tennessee Board of Accountancy in 1997 and deftly served that body until 2003; in August

2006, she was first elected to the Shelby County General Sessions Court, Division IV bench, and she was re-elected in August 2014; and

WHEREAS, an intrepid leader respected for her integrity and devotion, Judge Deborah Henderson initiated and oversees a mediator of the day program for the Division IV court; she has served on the Faith Based Initiatives Committee of the Tennessee Access to Justice Commission, and in September 2013, she was elected as the 2013-2014 Vice President/Western Division of the General Sessions Judges Conference; and

WHEREAS, Judge Henderson's professional memberships include the National Bar Association, the Memphis Bar Association, the Association of Women Attorneys, the American Judges Association, and the National Association of Women Judges; she also serves on the Alumni Board for the University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law and is a Master Emeritus on the Leo Bearman, Sr., Chapter of the American Inns of Court; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Judge Deborah Henderson was named the American Business Women Association's Business Associate of the Year in 2001, received the African American Legacy Award from the North Memphis District, AME Church in 2010, and was selected as one of the *Tri-State Defender's* 50 Women of Excellence in 2011; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, she received the Chancellor Charles Rond Judge of the Year Award from the Young Lawyers Division of the Memphis Bar Association and the first-ever Mid-South Community and Justice Mediation Award; in 2018, she was named one of the 12 Most Outstanding Women by the Memphis Inter-Denominational Fellowship, Inc., and was awarded the Champion of Justice Award from Memphis Area Legal Services; and

WHEREAS, she also serves her community as an active member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority, the National Council of Negro Women, and Mt. Vernon Baptist Church, Westwood; and

WHEREAS, it is most fitting that we honor Judge Henderson at this time; 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 recognize and honor Judge Deborah Means Henderson for her astute,

devoted service to the people of Memphis and Shelby County as a Judge of Division IV, Shelby County General Sessions Court, Civil Division, extending our best wishes for her continued success.

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