

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 864

By Cooper

A RESOLUTION to recognize Pastor Melvin Watkins, Third Annual Living Legend Awards honoree.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we 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 Pastor Melvin Watkins, who is being honored at the Third Annual Living Legend Awards in recognition of the leadership and service he has provided to the people of Shelby County; and

WHEREAS, the Third Annual Living Legend Awards ceremony, which honors Harriet Tubman and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., will be held at the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis on March 8, 2020; and

WHEREAS, a preacher for more than two decades, Pastor Melvin Watkins is the senior pastor of Mt. Vernon Baptist Church-Westwood, a thriving congregation with a membership of 4,500 congregants, and an adjunct professor of theology at the Memphis College for Urban Theological Studies at Union University; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Watkins devotes his time and energy to many important organizations in the Westwood community, including Uplift Westwood CDC, an organization he founded to revitalize the community, and Westwood Manor, Inc., a senior housing community that he serves as its president; he is also the founder of The Chosen Ones Mentoring Initiative, which prepares male youth for manhood; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Melvin Watkins serves on the board of directors of Westwood Youth Development, the Memphis Christian Pastors Network, and the Memphis College for Urban Theological Studies; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Watkins's passion for outreach and evangelism stretches far beyond Memphis, as he has led ministry teams to Native American reservation communities and many African nations, including Sierra Leone, Mali, and Uganda, where he assisted in planting churches, teaching in Bible schools, conducting seminars, and encouraging believers to faithfully continue their Christian ministries; and

WHEREAS, a proud veteran of the United States Air Force, Pastor Watkins is a graduate of Hamilton High School and Crichton College, and he received his Master of Divinity degree from Memphis Theological Seminary; and

WHEREAS, he is a Fellow of the Black Theology and Leadership Institute of Princeton Theological Seminary and a candidate for the Doctor of Ministry degree in Pastoral Theology and Church Revitalization from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Boston, Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Watkins is grateful for the love and support he shares with his wife, Loie Tyler Watkins, and their three sons; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Melvin Watkins 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 congratulate Pastor Melvin Watkins upon his recognition at the Third Annual Living Legend Awards, applaud his outstanding community leadership, and extend 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 and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.