

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1184

By Coley

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Brett Batterson for his distinguished service as president and chief executive officer of the Orpheum Theatre Group.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those citizens who, through their extraordinary efforts, have distinguished themselves as community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy person is Brett Batterson, who is the president and chief executive officer of the Orpheum Theatre Group in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, since assuming the role of president and chief executive officer on January 1, 2016, Mr. Batterson has overseen the renaming and branding of the nonprofit organization and led a total renovation of the theatre's historic interior and offices; he also founded the Memphis Cultural Coalition, a roundtable of executives of the city's largest cultural institutions; and

WHEREAS, Brett Batterson introduced Mending Hearts Camp, an arts camp for children who have experienced the death of a parent, in 2017, and the following year, Camp SAY Across the USA: Memphis, an arts program for young people who stutter, was added to the lineup of educational offerings; and

WHEREAS, before coming to Memphis, Mr. Batterson was executive director of the national historic landmark Auditorium Theatre in Chicago, Illinois, for eleven years, during which time he created three successful city-wide festivals: the Miles Davis Festival, the Billy Strayhorn Festival, and the Music + Movement Festival. The theatre staged the successful celebration of its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary season in 2014 and hosted the NFL draft the following year. He also

cofounded Enrich Chicago, a program that strives to bring racial equity in arts management to the city's cultural institutions; and

WHEREAS, Brett Batterson also served as chief operating officer of the Michigan Opera Theatre in Detroit, Michigan, for ten years; he spearheaded the construction of the Detroit Opera House and was integral to the success of The Three Tenors' performance at Tiger Stadium, which was the highest-grossing concert in the United States in 1999 and had ticket sales that exceeded six million dollars; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Batterson was previously a scenic designer and technical director for fifteen years, working at such theatres as the Guthrie Theatre, Minnesota Opera Company, Chattanooga Theatre Centre, Theatre Midland, Chattanooga Symphony and Opera Association, Chattanooga Ballet, Minnesota Jazz Dance Company, Utah Shakespearean Festival, Idaho Summer Repertory Theatre, The Nashville Network, the Grand Ole Opry, Beverly Dinner Playhouse, and Tulane Center Stage; and

WHEREAS, Brett Batterson holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Augsburg University and a Master of Fine Arts degree from Tulane University; and

WHEREAS, throughout his career, Mr. Batterson has been active in a number of civic and trade organizations, including The Broadway League and Independent Presenters Network, and he is a voter for the Antoinette Perry Award for Excellence in Broadway Theatre, more commonly known as the Tony Awards; and

WHEREAS, he presently serves on the Board of Directors of the Memphis Rotary Club and is a Paul Harris Fellow. He previously served on the boards of The League of Chicago Theatres and Illinois Presenters Network and on the advisory boards of the Chicago Jazz Philharmonic, Ensemble Español Spanish Dance Theatre, Kalapryia Center for Indian Performing Arts, and Giordano Dance Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Batterson was named the 2017 Presenter of the Year by the North American Performing Arts Managers and Agents, and he has been recognized by the State of Michigan and the Detroit City Council and Mayor's Office for his contributions to the state's cultural life. He accepted the inaugural Fifth Star Award on behalf of the Auditorium Theatre

from Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the City of Chicago, and in 2016, he was honored with the Think Big award from Orbert Davis's Chicago Jazz Philharmonic for his efforts to create performance opportunities for the orchestra; and

WHEREAS, his many professional accomplishments aside, Brett Batterson is most grateful for the love and companionship he shares with his wife, author and photographer Veronica Randolph Batterson, and their two daughters; and

WHEREAS, Brett Batterson epitomizes the spirit and commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly find it appropriate to acknowledge and applaud Mr. Batterson for his dedication to the State of Tennessee and its citizens; 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 Brett Batterson for his distinguished service as president and chief executive officer of the Orpheum Theatre Group and extend our best wishes for every 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 and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.