

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 534

By Massey

A RESOLUTION to recognize and commend Kathleen O'Brien,
president and chief executive officer of
Tennessee Performing Arts Center.

WHEREAS, it is the privilege of the members of this General Assembly to acknowledge and applaud those leaders in arts administration whose thoughtful stewardship and devoted service promote, preserve, and perpetuate the rich culture of the arts in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, one such individual is Kathleen O'Brien, current president and chief executive officer of Tennessee Performing Arts Center (TPAC) in Nashville; on June 30, 2019, Ms. O'Brien will step down from her leadership role with the organization, marking the end of an era; and

WHEREAS, during her almost fourteen years as president and chief executive officer, Ms. O'Brien has steered TPAC through a dramatic change in its business model, including an expansion of the board of directors, and its transition to independent ticketing/customer management and independent presenting of Broadway tours; and

WHEREAS, under Ms. O'Brien's leadership, TPAC has seen record-breaking ticket sales, a three-fold increase in philanthropic fundraising, the addition of two major initiatives in arts education programming (Disney Musicals in Schools and the Nashville High School Musical Theatre Awards, in partnership with Lipscomb University), significant growth in cash reserves and net assets, the design and construction of a new donor lounge, and the development and production of "Nashville House Concerts," a TPAC-owned music series in the historic War Memorial Auditorium; and

WHEREAS, also included among her accomplishments is the development of new musical theatre: the 2017 world premiere of *Part of the Plan*, featuring the music of Dan

Fogelberg and including songs written and/or produced in Nashville; *Perfect 36*, the story surrounding Tennessee's struggles to pass the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote; and *American Prophet*, a new musical about Frederick Douglass by Nashville's Marcus Hummon; and

WHEREAS, Kathleen O'Brien's tenure with TPAC began in 1988, when she came on board as director of public affairs; prior to her appointment to the top position at TPAC in May 2005, she served the organization as vice president of public affairs and marketing, senior vice president of marketing, executive vice president of sales and customer services, and chief operating officer; and

WHEREAS, during her thirty-one years with TPAC, average annual attendance doubled; the total operating budget increased from \$4.9 million to \$24 million; and more than 13 million audience members, including 1.8 million Tennessee students, educators, and adults, were welcomed through one of the largest and most comprehensive arts education programs in the nation; and

WHEREAS, Ms. O'Brien is the immediate past chair of the Board of Directors of Virginia Intermont College in Bristol, Virginia, from which she graduated *summa cum laude* with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism and served as director of public relations prior to relocating to Nashville; and

WHEREAS, her professional associations include the Nashville Agenda's Steering Committee, the National Performing Arts Center Consortium, the Independent Presenters Network, which she serves as a member of the Executive Committee, and the Broadway League, a national trade association; and

WHEREAS, Ms. O'Brien is a graduate of both Leadership Nashville and Leadership Music; she previously served on the boards of the Nashville Institute for the Arts, the Center for Non-Profit Management's Association for Non-Profit Executives, and the Nashville Entertainment Association, which she also served as president; and

WHEREAS, often duly honored for her leadership and accomplishments, Ms. O'Brien received the 2010 First Night Theater Award and was honored with the Road Marketing Award by the Broadway League; and

WHEREAS, throughout her many successes, Kathleen O'Brien has enjoyed the love and companionship of her husband, Tim, and their cats, Simon and Garfunkel; and

WHEREAS, for more than three decades, Ms. O'Brien has been an invaluable member of the TPAC organization; her ability, insight, and drive have helped TPAC to become one of the premier performing arts centers in the country; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we recognize and commend Kathleen O'Brien, president and chief executive officer of Tennessee Performing Arts Center, for her invaluable service to the arts in Tennessee, 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.