

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 724

By Watson

A RESOLUTION to honor Joe Ferguson on the occasion of his retirement as chair of Chattanooga's EPB board.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly is pleased to pay tribute to a gentleman who has served his community with passion for nearly thirty years; and

WHEREAS, Joe Ferguson retired as EPB board chair on July 31, 2019; he first joined the EPB board in 1991 and was tapped to serve as chair in 2000; and

WHEREAS, established as an independent board of the City of Chattanooga in 1935, EPB is a municipally owned utility that provides electric power and fiber optic communications services as a means of promoting economic development and enhancing the quality of life for the people of the greater Chattanooga area; and

WHEREAS, during his illustrious tenure with EPB, Mr. Ferguson led the EPB board in a number of transformative decisions, most notably the approval in 2008 of its plan to build a community-wide fiber optics network and other advanced infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, as a result of that decision, Chattanooga has been called "The Gig City" and held up as a national model for deploying the world's fastest internet and America's most advanced Smart Grid electric distribution system; and

WHEREAS, he provided astute leadership to the board as EPB broke new ground in providing world-class energy and technology solutions to support the Chattanooga community in realizing its full potential; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Ferguson played a critical role in helping EPB form and deepen a number of working partnerships, including joint projects with Oak Ridge National Laboratory focused on both research and job creation; and

WHEREAS, he also served as a strong point of connection and partnership between EPB and many community organizations, including the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Chattanooga State Community College, Hamilton County Schools, and the Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, Mr. Ferguson was honored as Chattanooga Area Manager of the Year in recognition of his long and successful career in business as well as his many contributions to community efforts and organizations, including EPB; and

WHEREAS, he may have retired from the EPB board, but Joe Ferguson has not retired from the Chattanooga community; he continues to work with a number of organizations on educational and economic development projects; and

WHEREAS, during his distinguished tenure as EPB board chair, Mr. Ferguson worked with purpose and conviction to implement a community-wide fiber optics network and the nation's most advanced electric distribution system, and he should be commended for his important role in realizing these worthy initiatives that benefit both present and future Chattanoogaans; 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 thank Joe Ferguson for nearly thirty years of dedicated service to the EPB board, applaud his innovative and effective leadership as chair, and extend to him our best wishes for much 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.