

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 860

By Gresham

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Melissa Rose Burniston Bratton of Columbia.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the untimely passing of Melissa Rose Burniston Bratton; and

WHEREAS, Melissa Bratton was an exemplary woman and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for her fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, born in Boone, North Carolina, on November 11, 1983, Melissa Rose Burniston Bratton was the oldest daughter of Harvey and Maureen Burniston and grew up in the East Tennessee mountains of Johnson County; and

WHEREAS, her love of agriculture was instilled in her at a young age, as her father was an agricultural education teacher and FFA advisor; she was a dedicated member of the Johnson County FFA chapter and served as East Tennessee State Vice President of the Tennessee FFA in 2002 and 2003; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Bratton attended Tennessee Technological University, where she double majored in agricultural education and agricultural communications; she quickly realized after interning with Tennessee Farm Bureau in 2004 that her passion was communicating the story of agriculture to others and getting to the root of the matter; and

WHEREAS, Melissa Bratton joined Tennessee Farm Bureau as assistant director of communications in 2006 and assumed the role of editor of *Tennessee Home & Farm* and *Tennessee Farm Bureau News* in 2013; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Bratton was an active and devout member of First United Methodist Church, where she and her husband spent countless moments with their dear friends in Sunday school; and

WHEREAS, she was also deeply devoted to her family, and she always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Melissa Bratton enjoyed the loving companionship of her husband, Kyle Bratton, and was the proud mother of two young children, Madelyn and Liam; she was the devoted daughter of Harvey and Maureen Burniston and the treasured older sister of Michelle (Ricky) Hansen and Mallarie (Cody) Graybeal; and

WHEREAS, she is lovingly remembered by her grandfather, Harvey Burniston, Sr.; her parents-in-law, Ronny and Debbie Bratton; her sister-in-law, Kelly (Matthew) Priest; her nieces and nephews, Braylin Hansen, Rylin Hansen, Emilia Graybeal, George Graybeal, Garrett Priest, and Audrey Priest; her aunts and uncles, Kathy Burniston, James (Susan) Burniston, Laurie Dunn, Tom (Becky) Burniston, and Tom Gasper; and her great-aunt, Barbara Brennan; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Bratton was preceded in death by her grandparents, Carter Burniston and George and Rosemary Gasper; an uncle, Bill Gasper; and an aunt, Kathy Welch; and

WHEREAS, Melissa Burniston leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; 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 honor the memory of Melissa Rose Burniston Bratton, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mrs. Bratton.

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.