

SENATE RESOLUTION 143

By Haile

A RESOLUTION to honor Dickie and Rufus Reese on the 100th anniversary of their family's business.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly takes great pleasure in recognizing a legendary family business that has epitomized hard work, family values, sound business practices, and close cooperation for the past 100 years; and

WHEREAS, the story of the Reese family's rise to prominence in business began in the 1920s, when Rufus Reese, Sr., started the family tradition of mule trading that has now carried over into the fourth generation; and

WHEREAS, upon their father's death in 1979, Dickie and Rufus Reese became the third generation to work in the mule-trading business; possessing a degree in animal science from the University of Tennessee, Dickie operated the accounting and bookkeeping aspects of the business, while Rufus assumed the responsibility of buying, trading, and selling mules; and

WHEREAS, with these two astute and dedicated gentlemen at the helm, the Reese Brothers Mule Company quickly became the powerhouse of the industry; and

WHEREAS, at the family's Greenwood Farms, mules are saddled, clipped, harnessed, and prepared for their future jobs; although many are used as show animals, the Reese family's mules are employed across the nation in various roles, including plowing crops in Amish communities; providing transportation for visitors and employees and packing supplies in our nation's parks, including the Grand Canyon; giving carriage rides to tourists; and pulling wagons for quail hunts; and

WHEREAS, Greenwood Farm and the Reese brothers are very active in mule auctions, and they are famous for their quality consignments to the three big mule auctions in Westmoreland; and

WHEREAS, Dickie and Rufus Reese retired, for the most part, in 2018 and handed the reins of leadership over to the fourth generation in the person of Richard Reese, Rufus's son; and

WHEREAS, having learned at the feet of two masters of the trade, Richard Reese is continuing the family's legacy with expertise and confidence; and

WHEREAS, Rufus's daughter, Dr. Rilla Reese Hanks, is a veterinarian who consults on medical and health issues at the farm; in a twist on the family business, she and her husband, Drew, are engaged in breeding mules; and

WHEREAS, in the golden years of their retirement, the Reese brothers seem to prefer a busman's holiday; Dickie still works the three big auctions, and Rufus can often be found at the barn caring for the mules; and

WHEREAS, the Reese family's mule-trading business has endured and prospered for 100 years, and Dickie and Rufus Reese are worthy of our approbation on this special occasion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor and congratulate Dickie and Rufus Reese on their family's 100 years as mule traders, salute their ongoing commitment to their family's legacy, and wish them and the fourth generation much continued happiness and success in the years to come.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.