SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 926 By Kyle

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Mrs. Barbara Walker Hummel of Memphis.

WHEREAS, it was with great sadness and a profound sense of loss that the members of this General Assembly learned of the death of Mrs. Barbara Walker Hummel, one of Tennessee's most distinguished citizens; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Hummel earned distinction and fame as the winner of the Miss Memphis pageant in 1947, while attending Memphis State College; a few weeks later she won the National Pageant over 53 other contestants to become Miss America 1947; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee's first Miss America, Mrs. Hummel stunned Memphians and admirers nationwide when she turned down stage and screen offers to return to her studies at Memphis State University after her illustrious reign as Miss America; and

WHEREAS, upon her graduation from college in 1948, Barbara married Dr. John Vernon Hummel, a prominent Memphis physician before a party of 2000 people at the First United Methodist Church in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Hummel was a gifted singer who performed as a soloist at the Second Presbyterian Church in Memphis for over 36 years; and

WHEREAS, Barbara also starred as Rita in an open-air production of *Rio Rita* at the Overton Park Shell in 1948 and, in 1953 she became one of the first female daytime television hosts in the country on WHBQ-TV's *Miss America Matinee*; a year later, she was the host of WHBQ's *The Lady of the House*; and

WHEREAS, a woman who fully appreciated the responsibilities, as well as the privileges of her crown, she performed with past Miss Americas in Huntington, West Virginia to raise funds for the Boys and Girls Club of that fair city; and

WHEREAS, Barbara Walker Hummel was highly admired and respected by her fellow Memphians as a community leader of uncommon dedication and ability; she contributed her time and innumerable talents to the Decorative Arts Trust, the Miss Memphis Pageant, the Board of the Front Street Theater, the Memphis Broadband Telecommunications Board, and rendered astute service as president of the Board of Opera Memphis, as chairperson of the Citizens Committee to Investigate the Shelby County Justice Center, and as president of the Beethoven Club; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, Barbara received the University of Memphis Alumni Association's prestigious Distinguished Achievement Award, an honor most befitting this remarkable woman and her contributions to her beloved alma mater; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Hummel was preceded in death by her devoted husband and was the proud parent of two sons, Robert W. Hummel and John A Hummel, and a daughter, Sally Hummel-Chumney, and the loving grandmother of six; and

WHEREAS, the singular legacy of devotion to family and community that Barbara Walker Hummel leaves behind will be long remembered and treasured by her friends and associates; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL

ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

CONCURRING, That we hereby pause to honor the memory of Mrs. Barbara Walker Hummel,

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recalling fondly her life of purpose and commitment and her many valuable contributions to the greater Memphis community and to Tennessee, even as we mourn her death.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we extend our sympathy and condolences to Mrs. Hummel's family and many friends.

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

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