



State of Tennessee

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 737

By Senators Massey, Briggs, Crowe, Mr. Speaker McNally

and

Representatives Harry Brooks, Daniel, Dunn, Kane, Smith, Staples, Zachary, Akbari, Beck, Boyd, Kevin Brooks, Byrd, Calfee, Camper, Carr, Carter, Casada, Clemmons, Coley, Cooper, Crawford, Curcio, DeBerry, Doss, Eldridge, Faison, Farmer, Favors, Fitzhugh, Forgety, Gant, Gilmore, Goins, Gravitt, Halford, Hardaway, Hawk, Hazlewood, Hicks, Matthew Hill, Timothy Hill, Holsclaw, Howell, Hulsey, Jernigan, Johnson, Jones, Keisling, Kumar, Lamberth, Littleton, Lollar, Love, Lynn, Marsh, Matheny, Matlock, McCormick, McDaniel, Miller, Mitchell, Moody, Moon, Parkinson, Pitts, Powell, Powers, Ramsey, Rogers, Rudd, Sanderson, Sargent, Cameron Sexton, Jerry Sexton, Shaw, Sparks, Stewart, Terry, Thompson, Tillis, Towns, Travis, Turner, Van Huss, Vaughan, Weaver, Dawn White, Mark White, Whitson, Williams, Windle, Wirgau, Madam Speaker Harwell

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend the Tennessee Theatre on the occasion of its ninetieth anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is the privilege of the members of this General Assembly to recognize those venerable cultural institutions that exist to foster and perpetuate the arts and, in doing so, contribute significantly to the public good; and

WHEREAS, one such organization is the Tennessee Theatre, which is this year celebrating its ninetieth anniversary; and

WHEREAS, opening its doors on October 1, 1928, the Tennessee Theatre in Knoxville was the elegant epitome of a movie palace, making all who entered feel like royalty as they enjoyed the city's premier entertainment destination. Clara Bow, the quintessential flapper girl, was the first actress to grace the Tennessee's silver screen in *The Fleet's In*; the house band Don Pedro and his Melody Boys also entertained that day, and Jean Wilson played the Mighty Wurlitzer Organ; and

WHEREAS, thousands more movies followed, including a week-long screening in 1938 of Disney's first feature-length animation, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, which entertained 70,000, and a 1953 world premiere of *So This Is Love*, honoring Knoxville's own Grace Moore; and

WHEREAS, there were live performances, too, by cowboy star Tom Mix, a then-unknown Roy Acuff, Broadway legend Helen Hayes, jazz great Glenn Miller, and the original funny girl, Fannie Brice, just to name a few; and

WHEREAS, falling on hard times in the early 1970s with the advent of multi-screen cinemas in the suburbs, the Tennessee Theatre faced an uncertain future like many of her fellow downtown movie palaces across the country; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Theatre was saved from demolition by Mr. James A. Dick and Dick Broadcasting of Knoxville, who purchased the facility in 1981; and

WHEREAS, once again the scene of wonderful musical performances, the 1980s found the Tennessee Theatre with two new tenants, the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra and the Knoxville Opera, and concerts of all kinds made a stop in Knoxville at the Tennessee Theatre, including the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, Johnny Cash, and Chet Atkins; and

WHEREAS, a group of local citizens, united in their love of the great facility, banded together in 1996 as the Historic Tennessee Theatre Foundation; this exemplary organization undertook the tremendous task to upgrade the theatre to meet modern requirements while also restoring its magnificence and beauty; and

WHEREAS, designated the official State Theatre of Tennessee in 1999 by the 101st Tennessee General Assembly, the Tennessee Theatre reopened in 2005 and now hosts more than 2,000 live performances annually for a wide audience of ages, backgrounds, and communities; and

WHEREAS, perhaps the building's crown jewel, the Tennessee Theatre's Mighty Wurlitzer Organ was originally installed in 1928 and underwent a complete restoration in 2001; today, the Wurlitzer entertains patrons before each classic film screening and has been the centerpiece of a free monthly community program, Mighty Musical Monday, for more than sixteen years; and

WHEREAS, the Wurlitzer organ is played by Bill Snyder, the house organist since 1979 and the unofficial ambassador of the Tennessee Theatre; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Theatre has enriched the arts and culture of Knoxville and the lives of its citizens for nine decades, and it is fitting that this cultural institution be honored; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor and commend the artists, staff, volunteers, and patrons of the Tennessee Theatre on the occasion of its ninetieth anniversary and extend to them our best wishes for every continued success.

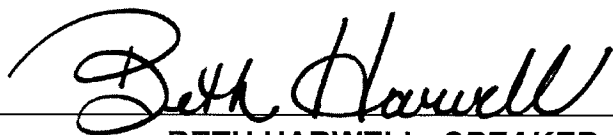
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 737

ADOPTED: March 26, 2018



RANDY McNALLY
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE



BETH HARWELL, SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APPROVED this 29th day of March 2018



BILL HASLAM, GOVERNOR