



State of Tennessee

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 3

By Representative Butler

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor Charles Geesling, legendary bluegrass musician of the Upper Cumberland Region.

WHEREAS, it is the privilege of the members of this legislative body to recognize those Tennesseans who are wholly devoted to their craft and enrich the lives of their fellow citizens through their art; and

WHEREAS, one such individual is Charles Geesling, a legendary bluegrass musician of the Upper Cumberland Region whose banjo picking and singing has delighted and inspired music lovers and fellow bluegrassers alike for many decades; and

WHEREAS, born in Overton County on May 28, 1944, Charles Geesling lost his father at a young age, and it fell to him to help his mother keep food on the table; he did so by hauling coal from East Tennessee, unloading the truck with a shovel; and

WHEREAS, the work ethic he acquired during his youth was of great benefit as he took on other jobs over the years, including hauling hay and working as a lookout at the Overton County fire tower; for a time, he worked at a cabinet shop, and he went on to open his own, building cabinets as well as stair treads; and

WHEREAS, that work ethic has also been apparent when it comes to banjo picking; as a boy who was encouraged by two of his aunts to play, he would listen to records, stop them, and play them back to learn different banjo licks; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Geesling has a style of banjo playing that is uniquely his own; also a gifted vocalist who sings lead, tenor, and baritone, he values tight harmony and excellent musicianship and has a knack for arranging traditional songs with a unique twist that makes them sound fresh; and

WHEREAS, over the years, Mr. Geesling has formed and led several bluegrass bands; in 1989 he, along with his son, Marty Geesling, formed Clear Creek, a band that had great success throughout the region and won the 1992 Fans' Choice Award at the Society for the Preservation of Bluegrass Music of America awards in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, after the tragic passing of Marty Geesling in 1999, Charles Geesling set down his banjo for a time; years later, he formed a new band called Clearview, which is still active today and had its most successful year yet in 2022; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Geesling and his bands have played various shows and venues throughout Tennessee, including the legendary *Cas Walker Show* in Knoxville, the *Carl Tipton Show* in Nashville, and the Dixie Café in Byrdstown; they have also performed private concerts in homes of the likes of racecar driver Carl Yarborough and United States Senator Howard Baker; and

WHEREAS, although he has one of the best and busiest bands around, Mr. Geesling still finds time to lend his band and his talents to a good cause; each year, he goes to Mayhue Master's General Merchandise to play the Mayhue's Kids fundraiser, which helps provide clothing and toys for less fortunate children in the Hillham area; and

WHEREAS, not only has Charles Geesling contributed greatly to the preservation of bluegrass music, he has done much to encourage the next generation of pickers; many throughout the Upper Cumberland Region cite Mr. Geesling for his endless encouragement and inspiration; and

WHEREAS, in addition to maintaining a thriving music career, Charles Geesling has enjoyed training and showing horses, an activity that has garnered him many blue ribbons; and

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WHEREAS, throughout his many accomplishments, Mr. Geesling has enjoyed the love and support of his beloved wife, Nelda; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Geesling has inspired countless others to carry on the tradition of bluegrass through his love of, dedication to, and excellence in the genre; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we pause to honor bluegrass legend Charles Geesling, a musician of the highest order who has brought much pride to his home state; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we hereby recognize and honor banjo player, band leader, and vocalist Charles Geesling, a bluegrass legend of the Upper Cumberland Region whose contributions will continue to influence and inspire others for 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.

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ADOPTED: January 21, 2023

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Sexton', is written over a horizontal line.

CAMERON SEXTON, SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES