

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 5

By Johnson

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Eugene Wade of
Williamson County.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Eugene Wade; and

WHEREAS, Eugene Wade was an exemplary individual who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wade retired from the Williamson County School District in 2012 after having served fifty years; and

WHEREAS, during his illustrious tenure, Eugene Wade experienced and made history by helping to integrate Williamson County's schools; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of Tennessee State University, Mr. Wade first interviewed for a job in the district with Director of Schools W.C. Yates in 1964. He commenced employment as a business teacher at Natchez High School, an all-black school in Williamson County; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wade dressed in a coat and tie every day to separate himself from his students, a habit he never stopped; and

WHEREAS, during his distinguished career, Eugene Wade positively impacted thousands of lives, including that of Willie Dickerson, executive principal of Franklin High School, who was a shy student of Mr. Wade's at Natchez High School; and

WHEREAS, in the 1960s, when schools began to integrate, Eugene Wade transferred to Franklin High School, where he taught business, shorthand, and accounting. Those were difficult years, he had later told *The Tennessean* during a post-retirement interview; he had parents of his students tell him they were uneasy with him teaching their children because of his

color, but he persevered and asked that they give him a chance, and, in the end, no parents withdrew their children from his classes; and

WHEREAS, after fifteen years of teaching at Franklin High School, Mr. Wade transferred to Brentwood High School, where there were few minority teachers; and

WHEREAS, exhibiting great leadership acumen, Eugene Wade rose through the ranks to become the employee relations and recruitment director for the entire district; and

WHEREAS, a dedicated public servant, Mr. Wade accrued two years of sick time during his career because he never took a sick day; he said many times that he never worked a day in his life because his work was his life; and

WHEREAS, a true gentleman and scholar, Mr. Wade was an inspiration to all who were fortunate enough to know him; and

WHEREAS, Eugene Wade leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity, compassion, and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that 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 NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Eugene Wade, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his 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 Mr. Wade.

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