

HJR16 INTRODUCED



1 HJR16
2 7DAA222-1
3 By Representatives Faulkner, Carns, Mooney
4 RFD: Rules
5 First Read: 04-Feb-25



1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

HJR___ MOURNING THE DEATH AND CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF UNITED STATES ARMY VETERAN, FORMER STATE LEGISLATOR, AND FORMER AMBASSADOR, WILLIAM JELKS CABANISS, JR.

WHEREAS, it is with profound sorrow that we note the death of William Jelks "Bill" Cabaniss, Jr. of Birmingham, Alabama, on February 2, 2025, at the age of 86; and

WHEREAS, his departure leaves a void in the lives of his loving family, many friends, and the community where he was highly regarded; and

WHEREAS, Bill Cabaniss was born in 1938 in Birmingham to William Jelks Cabaniss, Sr. and Florence Pierson Sanson Cabaniss; he graduated from the Lawrenceville School in New Jersey in 1956 and matriculated to Vanderbilt University, graduating in 1960; he trained in Vanderbilt's ROTC program and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army; he served as an Airborne Ranger for three years of active duty in Germany; and in 1964, he was awarded the Army Commendation Medal; and

WHEREAS, in 1962, Bill Cabaniss married his wife of 58 years, Catherine Hood Caldwell; they shared an extraordinary life together, beginning in Zweibrucken, Germany; after Bill's honorable discharge from active duty, the couple moved to Birmingham to start their family; he acquired a small metal grinding company that he successfully



HJR16 INTRODUCED

29 built into Precision Grinding, Inc.; and

30 WHEREAS, concerned about Alabama's relationship to
31 business, Bill Cabaniss ran for and won a seat in the
32 Alabama House of Representatives in 1978; in 1982, he was
33 elected to the Alabama State Senate and served eight years;
34 he supported many bipartisan bills that most benefited the
35 citizens of Alabama; his peers voted him one of five
36 outstanding state senators; and

37 WHEREAS, State Senator Cabaniss attempted a run for
38 the U.S. Senate and, although he was unsuccessful, he gained
39 the friendship of President George W. Bush who appointed him
40 Ambassador to the Czech Republic; he served that post with
41 distinction from 2004 to 2006, further cementing ties
42 between the two democracies; he traveled and lectured
43 throughout Europe on behalf of the United States and the
44 Czech Republic; he maintained a friendship with President
45 Vaclav Klaus and upon returning home, he became involved in
46 several not-for-profit organizations in Prague and New York;
47 and

48 WHEREAS, he was active in his Birmingham community
49 and served on the boards of directors for several notable
50 firms; he chaired the Metropolitan Development Board and the
51 Board of Junior Achievement of Jefferson County; he was
52 inducted into the Alabama Academy of Honor in 2004 and the
53 Alabama Business Hall of Fame in 2006; he served faithfully
54 as Senior Warden at Saint Luke's Episcopal Church for many
55 years; and

56 WHEREAS, he was predeceased by his wife; son, William



HJR16 INTRODUCED

57 Jelks Cabaniss III; and sister, Joan Cabaniss Harrison; he
58 will be lovingly remembered by his loving fiance, Linda
59 Parker Johnson; daughters, Mary Cabaniss Ballard and Frances
60 Cabaniss Johnson (Kenny); sister, Florence Cabaniss Parnegg;
61 his beloved grandchildren, Mary Steele Johnson, Bill
62 Johnson, Kenny Johnson, and twins, Frances Jean and Maria
63 Nancy Ballard; and a host of nieces, nephews, extended
64 family, and many friends and former colleagues; and

65 WHEREAS, although his presence will be greatly
66 missed, the memory of Bill Cabaniss will be cherished in the
67 hearts of all who knew and loved him; now therefore,

68 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
69 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the death of William Jelks
70 Cabaniss, Jr. is recorded with deep sadness, and this
71 resolution is offered to his family in tribute to his life
72 and with heartfelt sympathy to his loved ones whose grief is
73 shared by many.