

HJR85 ENROLLED



1 HJR85
2 XDPS2ZE-2
3 By Representatives Ross, Colvin, Lovvorn
4 RFD: Rules
5 First Read: 03-Feb-26



HJR85 Enrolled

1 Enrolled, An Act,

2

3 HONORING THE LIFE, SERVICE, AND LEGACY OF DR. NEIL E.

4 CHRISTOPHER.

5

6 WHEREAS, it is with profound sorrow and deep regret

7 that we record the passing of Dr. Neil E. Christopher of

8 Guntersville, Alabama, on January 22, 2026, at the age of

9 92; and

10 WHEREAS, a self-described country doctor, Dr.

11 Christopher was a foundational pillar of family medicine, a

12 leader in promoting and improving rural health care, and a

13 true example of humanitarianism; and

14 WHEREAS, Neil E. Christopher was born on December 14,

15 1933, in Crossville, Alabama; after graduating as

16 valedictorian of his class, he attended Alabama Polytechnic

17 University, now Auburn University, first pursuing a degree

18 in agriculture; Neil was inspired by his brother to switch

19 majors and pursue a career in medicine; and

20 WHEREAS, he completed his studies at Auburn and

21 progressed to earn his medical degree from the University of

22 Alabama at Birmingham; after medical school and residency,

23 he chose to pursue general practice; when the specialty of

24 family medicine was created, Neil became a founding member

25 of the American Academy of Family Physicians; and

26 WHEREAS, in 1967, Dr. Christopher entered the United

27 States Navy, serving two years in active duty in Vietnam;

28 Dr. Christopher served as the Commanding Officer in the



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29 American Military Public Health Assistance Program, tasked
30 with training Vietnamese physicians and nurses while also
31 providing patient care; he was honorably discharged in June
32 1969 and was awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious
33 service; and

34 WHEREAS, following his two years in the Armed
35 Services, Dr. Christopher became the leading voice for the
36 urgent need for quality rural health care in Alabama and,
37 with the American Academy of Family Physicians, served as
38 Chair of its Rural Healthcare Committee; he spearheaded the
39 formation of the Alabama Family Practice Rural Health Board
40 and served as its inaugural Chair; and

41 WHEREAS, his servant leadership, wise counsel, and
42 professionalism were noted by many organizations and led to
43 his service on the Medical Licensure Commission of the State
44 of Alabama, the Auburn University Trustee Selection
45 Committee, and many other boards; and

46 WHEREAS, his efforts were widely recognized through
47 many honors, including Family Doctor of the Year by the
48 Alabama Academy of Family Physicians; the Samuel Buford Word
49 Award, the highest honor given for humanitarian service by
50 the Medical Association of the State of Alabama; induction
51 into the Alabama Healthcare Hall of Fame; the Auburn
52 University Alumni Lifetime Achievement Award; and the
53 establishment of The Neil E. Christopher, M.D., Endowed
54 Chair in Family and Community Medicine at UAB; and

55 WHEREAS, outside of medicine, Dr. Christopher
56 cherished time with his family, cheering on the Auburn



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57 Tigers, and boating; he was a man of deep faith and a
58 dedicated member of First Baptist Church of Guntersville;
59 above all else, he loved his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ;
60 his family; and his fellow man; and

61 WHEREAS, left to cherish his memory and live out his
62 legacy are his loving wife, Carolyn; sons, Neil Christopher,
63 Jr., MD (Susan) and Reid Christopher, MD (Lisa);
64 grandchildren, Wade Christopher, MD (Laura), Ryan
65 Christopher, Will Bridges (Brittany), Caroline Bridges
66 Johnson (JH), Elizabeth Bridges, Sarah Christopher, and
67 Aimee Christopher; and five great-grandchildren; now
68 therefore,

69 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
70 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the death of Dr. Neil E.
71 Christopher is recorded with deep sadness, and we honor his
72 life and legacy with profound gratitude for his
73 extraordinary contributions to medicine, education, rural
74 health care, and the people of Alabama; this resolution is
75 an expression of the high regard in which he is held by his
76 community and as a lasting testament to a life well lived in
77 service to others.



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Speaker of the House of Representatives

President and Presiding Officer of the Senate

House of Representatives

I hereby certify that the within Act originated in
and was passed by the House 05-Feb-26.

John Treadwell
Clerk

Senate

10-Feb-26

Adopted