

HJR85 INTRODUCED



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



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4 HJR___ HONORING THE LIFE, SERVICE, AND LEGACY OF DR. NEIL E.
5 CHRISTOPHER.
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7 WHEREAS, it is with profound sorrow and deep regret
8 that we record the passing of Dr. Neil E. Christopher of
9 Guntersville, Alabama, on January 22, 2026, at the age of
10 92; and

11 WHEREAS, a self-described country doctor, Dr.
12 Christopher was a foundational pillar of family medicine, a
13 leader in promoting and improving rural health care, and a
14 true example of humanitarianism; and

15 WHEREAS, Neil E. Christopher was born on December 14,
16 1933, in Crossville, Alabama; after graduating as
17 valedictorian of his class, he attended Alabama Polytechnic
18 University, now Auburn University, first pursuing a degree
19 in agriculture; Neil was inspired by his brother to switch
20 majors and pursue a career in medicine; and

21 WHEREAS, he completed his studies at Auburn and
22 progressed to earn his medical degree from the University of
23 Alabama at Birmingham; after medical school and residency,
24 he chose to pursue general practice; when the specialty of
25 family medicine was created, Neil became a founding member
26 of the American Academy of Family Physicians; and

27 WHEREAS, in 1967, Dr. Christopher entered the United
28 States Navy, serving two years in active duty in Vietnam;



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Dr. Christopher served as the Commanding Officer in the American Military Public Health Assistance Program, tasked with training Vietnamese physicians and nurses while also providing patient care; he was honorably discharged in June 1969 and was awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service; and

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

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

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

WHEREAS, outside of medicine, Dr. Christopher



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

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

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