

1 A RESOLUTION honoring the life and accomplishments of former Kentucky
2 Senator Joseph Richard Wright.

3 WHEREAS, Joseph Richard Wright was born on July 29, 1940, in Harned,
4 Kentucky, to the late Silas Benjamin Wright, Sr., and Dorothy Penick Wright; and

5 WHEREAS, Joseph Richard Wright graduated from Breckinridge County High
6 School, where he was a member of the Future Farmers of America; and

7 WHEREAS, Joseph Richard Wright attended the University of Kentucky, where he
8 met his beloved wife, Barbara, and graduated from the College of Agriculture with a
9 bachelor's degree in agriculture business; and

10 WHEREAS, Joseph Richard Wright proudly served as a member of the
11 Breckinridge County School Board and the United States Marine Corps Reserves; and

12 WHEREAS, Joseph Richard Wright served as a member of the Kentucky State
13 Senate from 1976 to 1992, representing the state's Fifth Senatorial District, and served as
14 the Majority Floor Leader from 1981 to 1992; and

15 WHEREAS, Joseph Richard Wright was known by his colleagues as a rallying
16 force with the ability to pull very diverse groups of legislators together and as a defender
17 of the legislative process who honored his word and never backed out of a commitment;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, Joseph Richard Wright fought as part of a group of Democratic
20 Senators known as the Black Sheep Squadron to demand that the legislature be more
21 open, transparent, accountable, and, above all, independent from the executive branch.
22 The group ultimately gained the support of Senate Republicans, and together their
23 movement flourished under the administration of Governor John Y. Brown Jr. and helped
24 shape the legislative process into what it is today; and

25 WHEREAS, Joseph Richard Wright had great love and passion for farming and
26 agriculture, which led him to serve on the board of directors of the Burley Tobacco
27 Growers Cooperative as a member, and eventually as president in 1995. He also co-

1 founded the Kentucky Future Farmers of America Foundation Board, where he served for
2 12 years; and

3 WHEREAS, Joseph Richard Wright received many awards and recognitions for his
4 dedication to service and agriculture, including the Kentucky Farm Bureau Distinguished
5 Service Award, Thomas Poe Cooper Distinguished Farm Leadership Award, UK
6 Agriculture Alumni Association's Distinguished Alumni Award, and many more; and

7 WHEREAS, Joseph Richard Wright dedicated his entire life to serving his family,
8 his church, the people in his community, and the people of the Commonwealth of
9 Kentucky; and

10 WHEREAS, Joseph Richard Wright passed away peacefully at Baptist East
11 Hospital on July 15, 2023, at the age of 82, surrounded by his loving family. He is
12 survived by his wife, Barbara; his siblings, Rosemary Alexander, Ben Wright, Susanne
13 Jenkins, Rebecca Glasscock, and Judy Beth Oglesby; his children, Barbara Ledman, Julie
14 D. Cheetham, Lydia C. Grimes, and Earl F. Wright; and his 14 grandchildren and one
15 great-grandchild;

16 NOW, THEREFORE,

17 ***Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of***
18 ***Kentucky:***

19 ➔Section 1. The members of the Senate do hereby honor the life and
20 accomplishments of former Kentucky Senator Joseph Richard Wright and posthumously
21 recognize him for his many accomplishments and dedication to the Commonwealth of
22 Kentucky.

23 ➔Section 2. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this
24 Resolution to Senator Gerald Neal.