

1       A RESOLUTION honoring the life and accomplishments of former Kentucky  
2 Governor Martha Layne Collins.

3       WHEREAS, Martha Layne Hall was born on December 7, 1936, in Shelby County,  
4 Kentucky, to the late Everett L. and Mary Lorena Taylor Hall. She grew up in Bagdad,  
5 Kentucky, and graduated from Shelbyville High School; and

6       WHEREAS, in 1959, Martha Layne Hall earned her Bachelor of Science from the  
7 University of Kentucky, and won the title of the Kentucky Derby Queen; and

8       WHEREAS, while student teaching in Scott County, Martha Layne Hall met and  
9 married a Georgetown College graduate, Bill Collins. While her husband pursued  
10 dentistry at the University of Louisville, they began their life together in Louisville,  
11 Kentucky, and she began teaching in the Jefferson County Public Schools; and

12       WHEREAS, after moving to Woodford County and continuing to teach in the  
13 public schools, Martha Layne Collins organized Woodford County's first Junior Miss  
14 Pageant, and became known for her organizational skills; and

15       WHEREAS, in 1971, Martha Layne Collins became an active participant in  
16 politics, and she applied her keen organizational skills and her ability to collaborate,  
17 corral, and build connections with people from all backgrounds to become an  
18 instrumental aide for Wendell Ford during his campaign for Governor; and

19       WHEREAS, her efforts in the successful campaign were recognized by the newly  
20 elected Governor Ford, as she was named Kentucky's Democratic national  
21 committeewoman; and

22       WHEREAS, in 1975, Martha Layne Collins won the election to serve as Clerk of  
23 the Kentucky Court of Appeals. When that elected office was eliminated by  
24 constitutional reform in 1976, she became the first Clerk of the new Supreme Court of  
25 Kentucky and the first Clerk of the new Kentucky Court of Appeals. Always an educator  
26 at heart, she created an educational program for county officials, school systems, and the  
27 citizens of the Commonwealth to understand the constitutional changes; and

1        WHEREAS, in 1979, Martha Layne Collins earned the nomination for Lieutenant  
2 Governor as the only woman in a large field of candidates. She was part of the winning  
3 ticket, and served alongside Governor John Y. Brown, Jr. as the Commonwealth's  
4 Lieutenant Governor through 1983; and

5        WHEREAS, during her role as Lieutenant Governor, Martha Layne Collins stepped  
6 into the Governor's ceremonial responsibilities that provided the opportunity for her to  
7 spend time across the state getting to know individuals in communities, while also being  
8 seen and being accessible to the public; and

9        WHEREAS, in 1983, Martha Layne Collins chose to campaign for Governor,  
10 where she promoted her ideals that government should be about "service, promptness,  
11 and accessibility," and it was the handshakes and connections made across the  
12 Commonwealth that contributed to the deciding difference as she won a close race for  
13 Governor; and

14        WHEREAS, as the first woman to hold the office of Governor in the  
15 Commonwealth of Kentucky, Martha Layne Collins continued to break ceilings by  
16 championing education reforms and economic and workforce development initiatives to  
17 set the precedent and foundation for record growth and investment in the state; and

18        WHEREAS, Governor Martha Layne Collins was the driving force to successfully  
19 recruit and forge the historic partnership with Toyota Motor Manufacturing to establish  
20 and invest in a manufacturing plant in Georgetown, Kentucky. After breaking ground in  
21 1986, the first Toyota Camry rolled off the line in May 1988, and the operations have  
22 continued to expand. Toyota Motor Manufacturing Kentucky is now Toyota's largest  
23 vehicle plant in the world, employs over 9,000 individuals, and has invested over \$154  
24 million in community and educational initiatives; and

25        WHEREAS, during the defense of budgetary measures in Governor Martha Layne  
26 Collins's administration of the budget, a pivotal Kentucky Supreme Court case decision  
27 in *Com. ex rel. Armstrong v. Collins* cemented the ability of the General Assembly to

1 temporarily amend or suspend an existing statute in a budget bill, and established that the  
2 power of the dollar is held by the authority of the legislative branch; and

3        WHEREAS, during her tenure as Governor, Martha Layne Collins created the  
4 Governor's School for the Arts (GSA). In 1987, the inaugural class hosted 120 of  
5 Kentucky's most promising high school sophomore and junior artists with talents in six  
6 disciplines for three weeks of focused, collaborative, and innovative quality instruction  
7 that was not previously accessible. Decades later, the legacy established by Governor  
8 Martha Layne Collins in GSA has impacted well over 5,000 students, and each summer  
9 the program now reaches over 500 artists in 10 different art disciplines; and

10        WHEREAS, the successes and lasting impact of Martha Layne Collins as Governor  
11 of Kentucky are numerous and varied, as demonstrated by projects and efforts in  
12 education reform, economic development, energy, and the environment; and

13        WHEREAS, even as her service to the Commonwealth as Governor concluded in  
14 1987, Martha Layne Collins continued her interests in education and proven business  
15 acumen, serving as president of St. Catharine College for six years, the Executive-in-  
16 Residence at the University of Louisville's School of Business, director of the  
17 International Business and Management Center at the University of Kentucky's Carol  
18 Martin Gatton College of Business and Economics, and a Resident Fellow at the Harvard  
19 Kennedy School Institute of Politics; and

20        WHEREAS, from 1998 to 2012, Martha Layne Collins served as an Executive  
21 Scholar in Residence at Georgetown College, and is remembered by her powerful  
22 presence on campus, her strength in leadership, and her distinguishing ability to form  
23 connections among people; and

24        WHEREAS, Martha Layne Collins passed away peacefully on November 1, 2025,  
25 at the age of 88. She is survived by her husband, Dr. Bill Collins; her son, Steve (Diane)  
26 Collins; her daughter, Marla Collins (Dudley) Webb; and her grandchildren, Dr. Taylor  
27 Collins, Catherine Collins (Preston) Messer, Alex Webb, Will (Mary) Webb, and Ellie

1      Webb; and her great-grandson, Eli Messer;

2            NOW, THEREFORE,

3    ***Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of***  
4    ***Kentucky:***

5            ➔Section 1.    The members of the Senate do hereby honor the life and  
6    accomplishments of former Governor Martha Layne Collins and posthumously recognize  
7    her for the demonstrated dedication and service to the Commonwealth of Kentucky and  
8    its citizens.

9            ➔Section 2.    The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this  
10   Resolution to Senator Reginald L. Thomas for delivery to Dr. Bill Collins.