

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 323

By Massey

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend the Emerald Youth Foundation on the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should recognize those exemplary organizations that, through their members' unwavering commitment to their communities, are a credit to this State; and

WHEREAS, one such remarkable charitable endeavor is Emerald Youth Foundation in Knoxville, which is celebrating its twenty-fifth year of operation; and

WHEREAS, twenty-five years ago, Emerald Avenue United Methodist Church began a summer outreach ministry for the youth in the city of Knoxville's Oakwood/Lincoln Park community. As the program grew, its services became available during both summer and after school; and

WHEREAS, with a desire to impact more urban young people and raise greater support, the ministry incorporated as a 501(c)3 organization known as the Emerald Youth Foundation; and

WHEREAS, in the latter half of the 1990s, the Emerald Youth Foundation expanded to support the urban youth in East Knoxville and Beaumont/Western Heights; and

WHEREAS, in that same time period, the foundation's flagship program, JustLead, was launched. In less than a decade, Emerald Youth expanded the program into churches and faith-based organizations throughout Knoxville, thus becoming the JustLead Network; and

WHEREAS, at the dawn of the millennium, St. Mary's Medical Center purchased a facility for Emerald Youth Foundation at 1718 North Central Street and leased it to the foundation for one dollar per year. Several years later, St. Mary's became Tennova Healthcare,

and the health company generously donated the entire building to the ownership of Emerald Youth; and

WHEREAS, the foundation started a separate, non-sectarian program called Emerald Charter Schools, which launched Knox County's first public charter school, Emerald Academy. The academy is a free, independently operated K-8 college preparatory school; and

WHEREAS, today, Emerald Youth Foundation and its network of churches and innovative programs, JustLead, Emerald Youth Sports, and Emerald Youth Fellows, serve more than 2,000 children, teens, and young adults each year; and

WHEREAS, Emerald Youth Foundation is a model institution, and the dedication of its founders and staff to helping provide a place of education and safety for the youth of Knoxville is representative of the Volunteer State, and it is appropriate that this General Assembly recognize this exemplary organization; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend the Emerald Youth Foundation on the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary and extend to all the members of the foundation's staff our best wishes for their continued success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.