



# Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

## Legislation Text

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A resolution honoring the life of George Harrison Cate, Jr., the first Vice Mayor of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County.

WHEREAS, George Harrison Cate, Jr. passed away on December 18, 2020 at the age of 92; and

WHEREAS, Cate, Jr. was a lifelong resident of Nashville, graduating from East Nashville High School as valedictorian in 1945, and then attending Vanderbilt University; and

WHEREAS, at Vanderbilt, Cate, Jr. was elected president of the Student Union, the Student Christian Association, and the Honor Council. He graduated Cum Laude in 1949, and went on to Vanderbilt Law School where he graduated Summa Cum Laude in 1951; and

WHEREAS, Cate, Jr. married his wife Carolyn Ward Bass in 1949, and the couple raised four children together; Lyn, Cathy, Emily, and George III; and

WHEREAS, in 1951, Cate, Jr. began his legal career as a partner with his father, George H. Cate, Sr. at Cate & Cate, Attorneys until his father's death in 1978; and

WHEREAS, Cate, Jr.'s legal career spanned 63 years, ending with his retirement in 2014. During his career, Cate, Jr. received the John C. Tune Public Service Award, an honor given to the Nashville Bar Association member who has shown the highest degree of dedication to the betterment of the community in which he or she lives; and

WHEREAS, Cate, Jr. also served in the military beginning in 1952 with two years of active duty as First Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps in Washington, D.C. He continued his military service as a member of the Army Reserve and was promoted to Brigadier General in 1979, serving until 1984 as commander of a military police brigade; and

WHEREAS, Cate, Jr. received the Legion of Merit for his outstanding military service and achievements; and

WHEREAS, Cate, Jr. was instrumental in the creation of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County in the 1960s; and

WHEREAS, after the Metro Charter was defeated in a referendum in 1958, Cate, Jr. Chaired the Citizens for Better Government group and led the campaign for the adoption of the Metro Charter, speaking on the merits of the proposed consolidation of city and county governments; and

WHEREAS, Cate, Jr.'s efforts were successful and on June 28, 1962, the Metro Charter passed by referendum and Nashville and Davidson County became the first consolidated Metropolitan Government in the nation; and

WHEREAS, in November 1962, Cate, Jr. was elected as the first Vice Mayor of Metro Nashville and served from April 1, 1963 until January 1966; and

WHEREAS, after his service as Vice Mayor, Cate, Jr. continued to dedicate his time and effort to Nashville and

Davidson County through his membership on the Metro Nashville Board of Education where he served as chair in 1981 and 1982, the Metro Historical Commission from 2008 to 2014, and as a member of the planning committee for the 50th anniversary of Metro celebration in 2013; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his service on Metro Nashville's boards and commissions, Cate, Jr. served in leadership roles on various organizations including the YMCA, the Salvation Army, Civitan Club, Sigma Chi Foundation, Old Oak Club, Youth Villages Board, and Council of Community Services; and

WHEREAS, Cate, Jr. was committed to preserving the history of Metro Government, frequently speaking about Metro's formation and history to various local organizations, including Leadership Nashville, and to delegations from other cities across the nation contemplating a similar form of government; and

WHEREAS, he spent his entire adult life as a member of West End United Methodist Church and was an avid outdoorsman and naturalist who loved the lakes, streams, and woodlands of Middle Tennessee. He actively shared his enthusiasm for wildlife and their habitat with family and friends; and

WHEREAS, George Harrison Cate Jr. will be remembered for his lifelong love of music, his professionalism and eloquence, his kindhearted and optimistic nature, and his dedicated service to Nashville and Davidson County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. The Metropolitan Council hereby goes on record as honoring the life of George Harrison Cate Jr., the first Vice Mayor of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County.

Section 2. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.