

By Senator Smith

14-2618-04

See HR 9117

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Senate Resolution No. \_\_\_\_

A resolution honoring Chesterfield Smith.

WHEREAS, rising from humble beginnings, Chesterfield Smith, whether serving his country during World War II, pursuing a public cause, or raising the standards of the legal profession, left a moral footprint that gained him the highest regard of his fellow citizens and blazed a trail for many to follow, and

WHEREAS, past president of both the American Bar Association and The Florida Bar, and a founder of one of the state's largest law firms, few have done more to enhance the legal profession than has Chesterfield Smith, whose dedication to improving the organized bar earned him the title "America's Lawyer," and

WHEREAS, Chesterfield Smith was a resolute, tough-minded individual who, never backing down from conflict, took on the highest when as president of the American Bar Association he denounced President Nixon for firing special prosecutor Archibald Cox, his simple, direct "No man is above the law" becoming a defining moment in the American legal system, and

WHEREAS, Chesterfield Smith was one of the first to actively recruit minorities to his firm, which under his leadership became a model of diversity, focusing on opening a door that had been historically closed to minorities and women; and he never lost interest in guiding young lawyers, constantly prodding and encouraging them to "be somebody," a legacy reflected in the lives of thousands who follow his simple mantra to "do good," and

1           WHEREAS, Chesterfield Smith's voice was that of the  
2 legally disenfranchised and, constantly reminding lawyers that  
3 the privilege to practice law carries with it the  
4 responsibility to represent the powerless, the poor, the  
5 underrepresented, and the victims of discrimination, he was  
6 instrumental in creating the national Legal Services  
7 Corporation, whose building in Miami bears his name, and

8           WHEREAS, United States Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader  
9 Ginsburg once described this extraordinary man as being "among  
10 the brightest, boldest, bravest, all-around most effective  
11 lawyers ever bred in Florida and the U.S.A.," and, although  
12 the state and nation deeply mourned his death, his legacy is  
13 that not of loss, but of one whose deeds place him in a  
14 pantheon of greatness and are those to which all may aspire,  
15 NOW, THEREFORE,

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17 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

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19           That the Senate takes great pride in recognizing the  
20 outstanding contributions made by Chesterfield Smith to this  
21 chamber, this state, and this nation.

22           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution  
23 be presented to Jacqueline Allee Smith, Chesterfield Smith,  
24 Jr., and Rhoda Smith Kibler, wife, son, and daughter of  
25 "America's Lawyer," as a tangible token of the sentiments of  
26 the Florida Senate.

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