

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION  
For  
CECIL DEWEY BRANSTETTER, SR.

A RESOLUTION to honor Cecil D. Branstetter, Sr.,  
for his laudable services to the  
legal profession and the Nashville  
Bar Association.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of the Nashville Bar Association should salute those members who through their extraordinary efforts have distinguished themselves as community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy person is Cecil D. Branstetter, Sr., who until his death on May 7, 2014 lent his time and talents over the years to the legal community and numerous other community organizations and endeavors in the City of Nashville, all of which have greatly benefited the lives of every citizen of this wonderful community; and

WHEREAS, a native Tennessean, Cecil Dewey Branstetter, the son of Miller Henry and Lille Adams Branstetter, was born on December 15, 1920, in Morgan County, Tennessee, in the rural and scenic community of Deer Lodge where he and his thirteen siblings grew up; and

WHEREAS, at the age of eighteen after graduating from Sunbright High School Mr. Branstetter left Deer Lodge carrying all of his worldly possessions in a cigar box to attend Lincoln Memorial University in Harrogate, Tennessee, becoming the first member of his family to attend college; and

WHEREAS, a tenacious and dedicated young man, Cecil Branstetter earned his tuition for three years at Lincoln Memorial University by working at the school's dairy, rising every morning at 3:00 a.m. to milk the cows before attending a full day of class and later returning to the dairy in the evening to milk the cows again; and

WHEREAS, though he left Lincoln Memorial University before graduation to provide for his widow Mother and younger siblings in 2000, the school recognized his personal sacrifice and contributions to the State of Tennessee by awarding him a Bachelor of Arts in Humanities and by establishing an annual scholarship in his name for a deserving student; and

WHEREAS, proudly answering the call to duty during World War II, Mr. Branstetter served in the United States Army Corps of Engineers from 1943-46, seeing duty in Germany; he would hold the rank of Lieutenant in the Adjutant General's Department of the U. S. Army Reserve from 1946-52; and

WHEREAS, it was on August 5, 1944, during his military service that Cecil Branstetter would marry the love of his life; Charlotte Coleman, the daughter of C. A. and Nora Hyatt Coleman of Harrogate, Tennessee, who was then working at the Pentagon in Washington; and

WHEREAS, during his military service in World War II, Cecil Branstetter won a competitive scholarship to Oxford University in Oxford, England, where he studied law before returning stateside to finish his last year of college, receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree from George Washington University in 1947; and

WHEREAS, pursuing a legal career, Mr. Branstetter was awarded the Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from Vanderbilt University in 1949; he won numerous accolades during this time in his studies, including election to Order of the Coif, which is reserved for the top 10% of the law school class, and service as the President of the Vanderbilt Bar Association, President of Delta Theta Phi legal fraternity, President of the Honor Council, and Editor of the Vanderbilt Law Review; and

WHEREAS, since attaining a law license in 1949, Cecil D. Branstetter, Sr., established himself as one of the preeminent legal minds in the United States and conducted an illustrious career as a lawyer for sixty-five years; he won inclusion in the noted publication *The Best Lawyers in America*, a truly distinguished honor for any attorney, not only for excellence in one practice area but three – criminal defense, employment law, and personal injury litigation – rare accomplishment, and he was accepted by the Bar Register of Preeminent Lawyers, indicating LexisNexis Martindale-Hubbell's highest ratings in legal ability and ethical standards; and

WHEREAS, highly esteemed and respected by his peers for his keen insight and wisdom, Mr. Branstetter is a past President of the Junior Section of the Tennessee Bar Association, a past Chairman of the Tennessee Board of Professional Responsibility, and a Fellow of the Nashville Bar Foundation and the Tennessee Bar Foundation; and

WHEREAS, founder and partner of Branstetter, Stranch & Jennings, PLLC, Cecil Branstetter was a member of the American, Tennessee, and Nashville Bar Associations, the American and Tennessee Trial Lawyers Associations, and the American Jurisprudence Society; and

WHEREAS, seeking to serve his fellow Tennesseans, Cecil Branstetter won election to the House of Representatives of the 77<sup>th</sup> Tennessee General Assembly in 1951; he capably represented the citizens of Davidson County, obtaining passage of the bill to allow women to serve on juries and the private act that essentially sparked the establishment of a metropolitan government for the City of Nashville and Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, a recognized leader in the efforts to unify Davidson County and the City of Nashville into one governmental entity, Cecil Branstetter served on the 1957 Charter Commission, the subsequent Charter Commission in 1961 that led to the successful passage of consolidated city-county government in 1962, and as the longtime chairman of the Metropolitan Government Charter Revision Commission; and

WHEREAS, Governors and Mayors sought out his wise advise and counsel; and

WHEREAS, a man of unlimited talents and skills, Mr. Branstetter has served on numerous boards and commissions, including the Metropolitan Action Commission, the Metropolitan Human Relations Commission, the Davidson County Anti-Tuberculosis Association, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the Council of Community Agencies, which he served as President; and

WHEREAS, an avid outdoorsman, Mr. Branstetter served as past President and founder of the Tennessee Environmental Council, President of the Tennessee Conservation League, and President of the Davidson County Sportsmen's Club; and

WHEREAS, Cecil Branstetter valued legal education as one of the highest callings of the legal profession and community; for several years he taught the only preparation course available in Davidson County for the bar examination with the late William Harbison and Val Sanford, and provided valuable assistance with discussions of points of law and verifying authorities to his former partner, Arthur Crownover, Jr., who authored *Gibson's Suits in Chancery*, Fifth Edition; and

WHEREAS, Vanderbilt University Law School honored him as a Distinguished Alumnus for his counsel to and work with the school; it later designated one of its academic programs the Cecil D. Branstetter Litigation & Dispute Resolution Program; and

WHEREAS, Cecil Branstetter epitomizes the spirit and commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; he was most grateful for the love and companionship he shared with his wife of seventy years, Charlotte Coleman Branstetter, and was the proud father of four devoted children, grandfather of ten beloved grandchildren and great-grandfather of nine treasured youngsters; and

WHEREAS, highly successful individuals like their father, Mr. Branstetter's adult children are Kay Branstetter Johnson, wife of the late Donald Johnson and a librarian at Harpeth Valley Elementary in Bellevue; Linda Branstetter Roach, wife of the late Dr. Ben Roach and an active community volunteer in Lexington, Kentucky; Jane Branstetter Stranch, a judge on the United States Court of Appeals of the Sixth Circuit and wife of James G. Stranch, III, who is a member of the law firm founded by Mr. Branstetter; and Dewey Branstetter, husband of Julie Branstetter and a member of the Nashville Bar; and

WHEREAS, three of his Grandchildren followed him into the legal profession providing continuity to the legal profession.


Finally, Cecil was a gentleman in the truest sense. He gave much of himself to others and to noble causes, accomplishing much without calling undue attention to himself. He was caring, gentle, sensitive, and serious in his work but still blessed with a keen sense of humor – and the list goes on and on. Indeed, he was a good and just man.

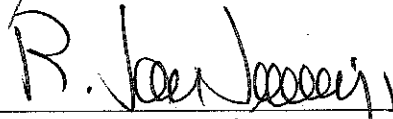
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Nashville Bar Association honor the life and service of a worthy member and friend, Cecil D. Branstetter, Sr.

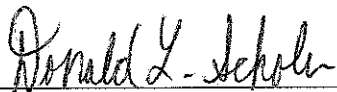
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the undersigned members of the committee designated to memorialize the life of Cecil D. Branstetter, Sr., each of whom was privileged to know and work with him for some forty years, move this Honorable Chancery Court for the Twentieth Judicial District of Tennessee that this resolution be accepted and be spread upon the pages of the memorial book kept for that purpose, to the end that the memory of our deceased colleague will forever be perpetuated in the

permanent record of the profession he served so well as an example of a life lived with courage and conviction and in meritorious service to the people of Nashville, Tennessee.

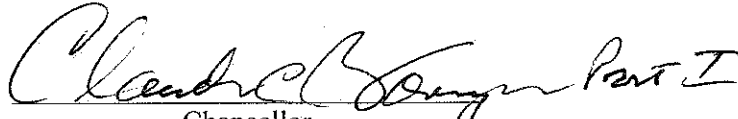
This the 20<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2014.

  
James G. Stranch, III

  
R. Jan Jennings

  
Donald L. Scholes

ENTER:

  
Chancellor