

House Resolution 418

By: Representatives Greene of the 134th, Houston of the 139th, Orrock of the 51st, Skipper of the 116th, Ashe of the 42nd, Post 2, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Commending Dan Ponder, Jr.; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, Dan Ponder, Jr., is a resident of Donalsonville and a distinguished former
3 member of the House of Representatives; and

4 WHEREAS, he recently received the high honor of being awarded a 2003 Profile in Courage
5 Award from the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum, and he is one of only five Georgians
6 to receive such award since its inception in 1990; and

7 WHEREAS, on March 16, 2000, the House of Representatives had voted 83-82 against a bill
8 enhancing penalties for hate based crimes when, in the words of the Kennedy Library and
9 Museum, "Dan Ponder, a 43 year-old conservative Republican businessman from rural
10 southwestern Georgia, defied expectations and rose to support the bill. Ponder, who owns a
11 chain of fast food franchises, had decided not to seek reelection, but had nonetheless been
12 expected to oppose the hate crimes legislation along with most other members of his party.
13 When he finished speaking, Republicans and Democrats rose to applaud and then passed the
14 legislation 116-49"; and

15 WHEREAS, Dan Ponder's speech in support of the hate crimes bill galvanized the General
16 Assembly and was the turning point in the consideration and passage of this historic
17 legislation. The Act was later signed into law by Governor Roy Barnes at a synagogue that
18 had been vandalized with symbols of swastikas; and

19 WHEREAS, Mr. Ponder's speech has since been widely circulated, has gained nation-wide
20 attention, and continues to touch the lives of thousands who have read those honest, heartfelt,
21 and stirring remarks; and

1 WHEREAS, Dan Ponder has demonstrated that one person with moral conviction and
2 courage can indeed make a difference, and he set an example worthy of emulation by all
3 elected officials.

4 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
5 Dan Ponder, Jr., is hereby commended for his exemplary conduct during his service in this
6 body, and the members of this body extend their warmest congratulations to him for his
7 receipt of the 2003 Profile in Courage Award from the John F. Kennedy Library and
8 Museum.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
10 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Dan Ponder, Jr.