

# Proclamation

by

Tennessee Supreme Court Chief Justice Sharon G. Lee

And

Tennessee Bar Association President William L. Harbison

Whereas, Seersucker weave is a distinctly southern fashion, having been introduced to the American south, probably through British colonial trade, sometime in the second half of the 19th century. The cotton weave, which originated in western India, became a signature look of the United States in the early 20th century because its light weight and pre-rumpled surface made it ideal for the intense humidity of summer; and

Whereas, the original seersucker suit was designed by Joseph Haspel at his Broad Street facility in New Orleans and seersucker suits have since been enjoyed by fashion-conscious individuals everywhere; and

Whereas, the advent of air conditioning brought with it great physical comfort, but a decided loss in fashion as it dramatically reduced the need to don a seersucker suit; and

Whereas, there has been a resurgence in the wearing of seersucker attire, especially by members of the legal profession who are attuned to matter of taste and style; and

Whereas, one of the greatest actor lawyers ever, Gregory Peck, famously wore a seersucker suit in the movie "To Kill a Mockingbird," accurately depicting the appropriate attire for a Southern lawyer. This tradition was continued by Andy Griffith in the popular "Matlock" television series; and

Whereas, in 1996, the tradition of wearing seersucker was restored in the United States Capitol when the Senate proclaimed a National Seersucker day in June of each year. Mississippi Senator Trent Lott stated that the purpose of Seersucker day was to show that “the Senate isn’t just a bunch of dour folks wearing dark suits and—in the case of men—red or blue ties.” But as of June 27, 2012, Seersucker Day had run its course; and

Whereas, all was not lost. On May 27, 2015, Louisiana Senator Bill Cassidy successfully advocated for the return of Seersucker Day, and Thursday, June 11, 2015 was designated National Seersucker Day; and

Whereas, in the immortal words of Joseph Haspel, “*Hot is hot, no matter what you do for a living*” and the wearing of seersucker has been known to cool tempers and promote great civility among lawyers; and

Whereas, William H. Haltom, prominent and revered Memphis attorney and former President of the Tennessee Bar Association, has embarked on a mission to restore seersucker attire to its rightful place in the fashion world by championing Seersucker Flash Mobs all across Tennessee and authoring the critically acclaimed book, Milk and Sugar: The Complete Book of Seersucker; and

Whereas, given the importance of establishing civility and fashion in the legal profession,

Now, Therefore, We, Chief Justice Sharon G. Lee and President William L. Harbison, do hereby proclaim June 16, 2016, as

## SEERSUCKER DAY

in Tennessee and encourage all lawyers to join us by wearing seersucker in this worthy observance.

In witness whereof, we have executed this document  
on this \_\_\_ day of June, 2016.

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Chief Justice

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TBA President