WHEREAS, Dr. Kenneth Emerson Wyatt was a dedicated special education director, administrator with the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), teacher educator, and mentor who had a long distinguished career working on behalf of the education of children and youth with disabilities and preparing special education professionals;

WHEREAS, Dr. Wyatt survived polio and coped with the post-polio syndrome in later years in a most confidant and constructive manner always remaining optimistic, exhibiting a positive attitude, showing a keen sense of humor, and serving as a positive and supportive role model;

WHEREAS, Dr. Wyatt received his doctorate in the field of special education from the University of Illinois-Champaign-Urbana;

WHEREAS, Dr. Wyatt was the Special Education Director, Eugene, Oregon; Chief, Special Learning Problems Branch of the Bureau of Special Education for the U. S. Office of Education, HEW; and was Professor Emeritus, Georgia State University, where he derived great pleasure from working with graduate students and teachers who dedicated their careers to working with the atypical student;

WHEREAS, Dr. Wyatt was responsible for initiating the first program in the southeastern United States that prepared teachers to work with students having physical challenges;

WHEREAS, Dr. Wyatt held many leadership positions during his career in the Council including President of the Georgia State Unit; Children’s Advocacy Network (CAN) Coordinator for the Teacher Education Division (TED) and the Division for Orthopedic, Physical, and Health Handicaps (DOPHH) (currently the Division for Physical, Health, and Multiple Disabilities, DPHMD); Governing Board Member representing TED, CEC Board of Governors; and Governor-at-Large U.S. serving on the CEC Executive Committee;

WHEREAS, Dr. Wyatt served as President of the International Council for Exceptional Children (1979-1980) during a time of unprecedented executive leadership crises due to the sudden death of long-time Executive Director, William “Bill” Geer, where Dr. Wyatt will be remembered for his determination, administrative acumen, selflessness, and collaborative leadership with the Executive Committee, the CEC Board of Governors, and CEC headquarters staff in maintaining the daily operations of the association, preserving a high level of membership services, moving forward with a long-term organizational plan, and ensuring a successful transition to a new executive director;
WHEREAS, Dr. Wyatt had an abiding interest in the development of CEC in Canada and facilitated a formal and ongoing communication system between the Canadian Council for Exceptional Children and CEC governance which resulted in the passage of a new amendment to the CEC Bylaws permitting Canada to nominate and elect the position of Governor-at-Large Canada on the Executive Committee;

WHEREAS, Dr. Wyatt’s career manifested itself in service, leadership, dedication, and knowledge as demonstrated through his other professional affiliations including the positions of President, Oregon Special Education Association; founding Board Member of the Oregon Education Association; President, Lane County, Oregon Mental Health Association; Board Member of the United Cerebral Palsy Association; and founding Board Member of the Pearl Buck Center, a special school devoted to offering children, youth, and adults with disabilities and their families appropriate education, services, and supports to achieve their individual goals;

WHEREAS, Dr. Wyatt contributed to numerous professional articles, books, monographs, and research projects;

WHEREAS, Dr. Wyatt received the Council for Exceptional Children’s Outstanding Leadership Award for his distinguished service and many lasting contributions to the Council;

WHEREAS, throughout his career, Dr. Wyatt was an eternal optimist and fully committed to ensuring the vitality and longevity of the Council in advancing the education of children and youth with exceptionalities and strengthening the profession;

WHEREAS, after his retirement, Dr. Wyatt moved to Vancouver, British Columbia where he served as an expert resource volunteer advising local government in its planning for playgrounds and in removing physical barriers in existing playgrounds for children and youth with special physical needs;

Now, therefore,

Be it resolved that, the Council for Exceptional Children, during the Annual Meeting of the Council’s Representative Assembly in San Diego, California, the 10th day of April, 2015, and on behalf of the Pioneers Division of the Council (CEC-PD), the Division for Physical, Health, and Multiple Disabilities (DPHMD), and the Georgia State CEC Unit convey deep appreciation and admiration for Dr. Kenneth Emerson Wyatt’s dedication, leadership, and many contributions to the Council, most particularly his stewardship and forthright leadership during a period of challenging organizational circumstances, his positive impact on teachers, his efforts to support the expansion of educational services and programs for children and youth with exceptionalities, and his initiative in fostering early advancements in the area of education for children and youth with physical challenges.