

By: Representative Weathersby

To: Rules

## HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 91

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING OLYMPIC WHEELCHAIR FENCER  
2 RYAN ESTEP FOR HIS OUTSTANDING CAREER AND CONGRATULATING HIM FOR  
3 HIS NUMEROUS ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE SPORT.

4 WHEREAS, Ryan Estep, a resident of Florence, Mississippi, and  
5 one of the world's best wheelchair fencers, retired from his sport  
6 in 2014 after reaching a level of success at the pinnacle of the  
7 wheelchair fencing that few other athletes have realized; and

8 WHEREAS, after sustaining an injury in 2005 that left him  
9 paralyzed from the waist down, Ryan was introduced to fencing when  
10 he was challenged to a bout by Sonia Fogal, a member of the United  
11 States National Wheelchair Team, and she "mopped the floor with  
12 him," instilling in him a desire to improve and within a few  
13 months he reached the national championships in 2009 and earned a  
14 silver medal; and

15 WHEREAS, after his success at the 2009 national  
16 championships, Ryan realized that he was still rough around the  
17 edges and needed someone to take him to the next level, and that  
18 is when he connected with Les Stawicki, whom Ryan considers to be



the best coach in the world and instrumental to his success over the years; and

WHEREAS, after diligently training with his coach, Ryan quickly climbed up the national and international rankings, and after his World Cup debut in Paris, he made the top 16 or better at every World Cup/World Championship he participated in; and

WHEREAS, in addition to winning seven national titles (3 epee, 2 foil and 2 saber), Ryan also held a top five world ranking for two years and finished top eight or better at every World Cup/Championship since Germany in 2012, until he finished his career in Warsaw, Poland, in 2014 where he took 6th place and maintained his top five world rank; and

WHEREAS, throughout his fencing career, Ryan received numerous medals and accolades, and won the Pan American Zonal in Brazil in 2011 for epee, which was his primary weapon, defeating all athletes from the Western Hemisphere; and

WHEREAS, Ryan served as the athlete representative for wheelchair fencing on Team USA from 2012-2014, and throughout his career, Ryan's attitude and hard work served as an inspiration for all athletes who knew him, including fellow Florence High School graduate, Joey Brinson, who participated in the 2012 Olympic Games in London alongside Ryan; and

WHEREAS, after retiring, Ryan finished his degree at Hinds Community College, started working for KLLM and finally traded in his saber for a bass boat; and



44 WHEREAS, even with his fencing success, Ryan considers his  
45 crowning achievement, and the thing he is most proud of, to be  
46 finding his way back to God, and credits fencing with showing him  
47 what it takes to "finish the race"; and

48 WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to recognize  
49 and commend the lives of fine Mississippi athletes, especially  
50 those such as Ryan Estep, whose unwavering dedication to his sport  
51 will serve as an inspiration to young Mississippians for many  
52 years to come:

53 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
54 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING  
55 THEREIN, That we do hereby commend and congratulate Ryan Estep for  
56 his outstanding wheelchair fencing career and for his numerous  
57 achievements in the sport, and extend best wishes for his  
58 continued success in all facets of his life.

59 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be  
60 furnished to Ryan Estep and to the members of the Capitol Press  
61 Corps.

