

By: Representative Miles

To: Rules

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 89

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE EAST RANKIN ACADEMY
2 LADY PATRIOTS VARSITY BASKETBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE MISSISSIPPI
3 ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS (MAIS) AAAA DIVISION II STATE
4 CHAMPIONSHIP AND FOR THEIR TREMENDOUS PERSEVERANCE IN THE MIDST OF
5 TRAGEDY.

6 WHEREAS, after a season of unimaginable loss and heartbreak,
7 the East Rankin Academy Lady Patriots Varsity Basketball Team
8 reigned victorious at the MAIS AAAA Division II State
9 Championship, displaying outstanding team spirit and true
10 perseverance in the face of overwhelming tragedy; and

11 WHEREAS, playing with full hearts and incredible amounts of
12 finesse and might, the Lady Patriots outplayed and ultimately
13 outlasted the Lamar School Lady Raiders, winning convincingly by a
14 score of 50-30; and

15 WHEREAS, the Lady Raiders struggled to get going offensively,
16 as the Lady Patriots stopped the dynamic inside 1-2 punch of
17 Lamar's Ambreah Waters and Debreasha Powers, and East Rankin's
18 Bailey Thompson knocked in 10 points to give the Lady Patriots a
19 16-12 lead at the end of the first quarter; and



20 WHEREAS, the Lady Raiders had a strong defensive performance,
21 but the Lady Patriots outscored them in the second quarter for a
22 22-17 halftime lead, and in the third quarter the Lady Patriots
23 outscored Lamar 16-4 to take command of the game at 38-21 going
24 into the fourth quarter, with Brooke Turnage scoring 9 points
25 inside, as the constant pounding of the ball by the Lady Patriots
26 took its toll on the Lady Raiders, who ultimately could not
27 overcome the Lady Patriots' suffocating defense and were outscored
28 12-9 in the final eight minutes; and

29 WHEREAS, with extraordinary strength through troubling times,
30 the Lady Patriots had a successful season in the wake of
31 tragically losing a dearly loved teammate on December 23, 2017,
32 when the Lady Patriots gathered for a Christmas party in Brandon,
33 Mississippi, and around midnight, sisters Brooke and Leah
34 Cunningham were involved in an automobile accident after they left
35 the party, with Leah passing away and Brooke spending numerous
36 weeks at both University of Mississippi Medical Center and
37 Methodist Rehabilitation before being released in February; and

38 WHEREAS, the Lady Patriots displayed tremendous character
39 after the heartbreak of losing their beloved teammate and friend,
40 and they stuck together as a team and held each other up as they
41 laid to rest their cherished teammate on December 27, and to honor
42 Leah during the championship game, the team wore a memorial patch
43 with her No. 14 on their jerseys and wore shooting shirts in her
44 favorite color; and



45 WHEREAS, Head Coach Rod Delaney stated that the girls never
46 gave up and continued to honor their teammate by the way they
47 played the game, which made them true champions, and the Lady
48 Patriots showed tremendous strength of character not only by the
49 way they carried themselves as young women, but also by honoring
50 Leah during their first game after the accident by carrying out
51 her jersey and by carrying Leah and Brooke in their hearts
52 throughout the season; and

53 WHEREAS, the Lady Patriots were hit with another hardship
54 during their game at Copiah Academy on February 9, 2018, when a
55 father of one of the players on the boys team, Mr. Stokes, passed
56 out in the bathroom and was resuscitated by Lee Dawkins, another
57 East Rankin parent, and to ensure that proper care was given to
58 Mr. Stokes, the game was paused several times, and once again, the
59 girls displayed the heart of champions as they gathered together
60 as a team and lifted up Mr. Stokes in prayer; and

61 WHEREAS, true champions are made and molded during trying
62 times of adversity, and through their exceptional devotion to the
63 team and their outstanding determination in the midst of
64 unimaginable hardship, these young ladies truly deserve the title
65 of champions; and

66 WHEREAS, the Lady Patriots finished their outstanding season
67 with a 29-6 record, and the key to their success this season was
68 the exceptional dedication and tremendous team spirit by the
69 following student-athletes: Bailey Thompson, Riley Scoles, Mollie



70 Macon, Brooke Turnage, Taylor Turman, Rachel Dearman, Lauren
71 Parker, Paige Loper, Neely Brunt, Kariana Simmons, Brooke
72 Cunningham, Emilee Tadlock, Macy Leach, Harley Bowman, Anna Claire
73 Shamburger, Kealey Bradford, Maile Tubbs, Anna Grace Boykin, Hanna
74 Caldwell and Adyson Tadlock; and

75 WHEREAS, the Lady Patriots were exceptionally coached and
76 tremendously inspired by Head Coach Rod Delaney and Assistant
77 Coaches Grant Thompson, Trudy Case Dawkins and Seth Cheatham, each
78 having broadened the team's knowledge of the game and refined
79 their skills in execution; and

80 WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to commend
81 outstanding student-athletes, especially those such as the East
82 Rankin Academy Lady Patriots Varsity Basketball Team, whose
83 dedication to their team and tremendous perseverance and
84 determination in the midst of heartbreak and loss bring honor to
85 their school, their community and to the State of Mississippi:

86 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
87 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING
88 THEREIN, That we do hereby commend the East Rankin Academy Lady
89 Patriots Varsity Basketball Team for winning the Mississippi
90 Association of Independent Schools AAAA Division II State
91 Championship and for their tremendous perseverance in the midst of
92 tragedy.

93 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
94 furnished to Headmaster Dan R. Boyce, Head Coach Rod Delaney, the



95 family of Leah and Brooke Cunningham and to the members of the
96 Capitol Press Corps.

