

By: Senator(s) Norwood, Simmons (12th),
Blackmon, Blackwell, Blount, Caughman,
Frazier, Hopson, Jackson (11th), Jackson
(32nd), Jordan, Sojourner, Thomas, Turner-
Ford, Witherspoon, Simmons (13th)

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 527

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REMEMBERING THE LEGACY OF JACKSON
2 STATE UNIVERSITY LEGEND WALTER PAYTON ON THE OCCASION OF HIS
3 DESIGNATION AS NO. 16 IN ESPN'S COLLEGE FOOTBALL'S 150 GREATEST
4 PLAYERS.

5 WHEREAS, we join the students, alumni, coaches and faculty of
6 Jackson State University in celebrating the legacy of JSU Legend
7 Walter Payton on the occasion of being named No. 16 in ESPN's
8 College Football 150: College Football's 150 Greatest Players;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, one of the greatest players in NFL history, Walter
11 Payton earned nine Pro Bowl selections and set several rushing
12 records during his 13 years with the Chicago Bears; and

13 WHEREAS, Payton was a star running back for the Chicago
14 Bears, establishing multiple records and earning nine Pro Bowl
15 selections during his Hall of Fame career. Also known for his
16 charitable work, Payton passed away on November 1, 1999; and

17 WHEREAS, Walter Jerry Payton was born on July 25, 1954, in
18 Columbia, Mississippi. Known by the nickname "Sweetness," Payton
19 was admired both for his astonishing football skills and his



generous off-the-field personality. Payton first began to attract national attention as a halfback at Jackson State University, making the starting lineup his freshman year in 1971. He was selected for the All-American team and was named the Black College Player of the Year in 1973 and 1974. In his four years at Jackson State, Payton rushed for more than 3,500 yards and scored more than 450 points, showing fans and opponents alike just what a versatile and talented player he was. Off the field, he showed his interest in helping others, studying education with an emphasis on working with the deaf; and

WHEREAS, Payton continued to excel after joining the NFL's Chicago Bears in 1975. Known for both his speed and power, he rushed for a single game-record 275 yards in 1977, finishing the year as the league MVP. Payton went on to earn nine Pro Bowl selections, his efforts annually propelling the Bears into playoff contention. Nearing the end of his career, he finally earned a Super Bowl ring when Chicago defeated the New England Patriots in Super Bowl XX in January 1986, with the team widely believed to be one of the greatest professional football teams ever; and

WHEREAS, the great running back held many NFL records upon his retirement in 1987, including the career-rushing record of 16,726 yards. He was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1993, and the College Football Hall of Fame in 1996; and

WHEREAS, after retiring, Payton explored business opportunities in several fields, including real estate,



45 restaurants and race cars. Living up to his nickname, he spent
46 much of his time working to make life better for other people,
47 primarily through the efforts of the Walter Payton Foundation.
48 The football great was survived by his wife, Connie, and two
49 children, Jarrett and Brittney. His charitable organization
50 became the Walter and Connie Payton Foundation, with his wife
51 taking over the foundation's mission of helping children and
52 veterans; and

53 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we acknowledge the
54 legacy of a Mississippi sports legend who has brought great honor
55 to his university, his community and to the State of Mississippi:

56 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
57 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
58 we do hereby remember the legacy of Jackson State University
59 Legend Walter Payton on the occasion of his designation as No. 16
60 in ESPN's College Football 150: College Football's 150 Greatest
61 Players, and extend to Walter's family our best wishes on this
62 high honor.

63 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
64 the Walter and Connie Payton Foundation, forwarded to the
65 President of Jackson State University, and made available to the
66 Capitol Press Corps.

