

By: Senator(s) Fillingane, Barnett, Caughman, Chism, DeBar, Johnson, Seymour, Williams, Jackson (32nd), Simmons (12th), Simmons (13th), Sparks

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 512

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REMEMBERING THE CAREER OF LEGENDARY
2 COLLEGE AND NFL FOOTBALL PLAYER AND COACH RAY PERKINS FROM PETAL,
3 MISSISSIPPI, AND EXTENDING THE SYMPATHY OF THE LEGISLATURE TO HIS
4 BEREAVED FAMILY.

5 WHEREAS, we join the college and professional football
6 community and citizens of Petal, Mississippi, in honoring the life
7 and career of Ray Perkins, the former Alabama receiver who
8 replaced Bear Bryant as Crimson Tide's Coach and started the
9 transition with the New York Giants that led to two Super Bowl
10 Titles. Ray passed away on December 9, 2020, at age 79; and

11 WHEREAS, Ray Perkins left a head coaching job with the NFL's
12 Giants to replace Bear Bryant following the 1982 season. It was a
13 dream job for the former Crimson Tide star receiver. Perkins won
14 three bowl games at Alabama and was 32-15-1, but he also went 5-6
15 in 1984. It was the program's first losing season since 1957, the
16 year before the school hired Bryant. He also served as Athletic
17 Director during that period; and

18 WHEREAS, as an NFL Coach, he hired both Bill Parcells and
19 Bill Belichick, and both those pro football masterminds consider



20 Perkins a mentor. As a player, he starred for both Bear Bryant
21 and Don Shula. Bryant called Perkins the best offensive player on
22 two Alabama National Championship Teams. He caught passes from
23 Joe Namath and Snake Stabler in college, and then caught passes
24 from Johnny Unitas and Earl Morrall in the pros. He drafted and
25 coached the great Lawrence Taylor with the New York Giants; and

26 WHEREAS, an All-America receiver at Alabama in 1966, Perkins
27 played professionally for the Baltimore Colts from 1967-1971; and

28 WHEREAS, while he had only a 23-34 regular-season mark with
29 the Giants, he started a turnaround for the organization before
30 leaving. In 1981, Perkins led the team to its first postseason
31 berth since 1963. New York upset the defending NFC champion
32 Eagles in the NFC wild-card game before losing in the divisional
33 round to a San Francisco 49ers team that went on to win the Super
34 Bowl. Perkins had been Offensive Coordinator with the San Diego
35 Chargers before joining the Giants. He was then-General Manager
36 George Young's first major hire and the two upgraded the roster
37 and installed discipline; and

38 WHEREAS, Bill Parcells, the Defensive Coordinator Perkins had
39 hired, led the Giants to five postseason berths, two NFC East
40 titles and two Super Bowl victories in his eight seasons as Coach.
41 "I loved Ray and he was a very close friend of mine," Parcells
42 said. "He's the only reason I was in pro football; he's the one
43 who brought me into the league. He was my friend." Perkins also
44 was the Head Coach of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers from 1987-1990. He



45 later spent one season leading the Arkansas State program before
46 working as an assistant for several NFL teams; and

47 WHEREAS, it all started for Perkins at Petal High School or
48 in the service station right across the street. For all his four
49 years of high school, Perkins, a carpenter's son, opened the
50 Sinclair gas station at 6:00 a.m. before he went to school. He
51 also worked on his school lunch break, then he would close the
52 station after he finished practicing whatever sport he was playing
53 late in the afternoon or early evening. Perkins could take a car
54 engine apart and put it back together. Same with transmissions.
55 One problem: More often than not, his clothes were soiled with
56 grease and oil when he went to school, which led to his nickname,
57 "Grease"; and

58 WHEREAS, in 2010, Perkins was coaching junior high as a
59 volunteer at Presbyterian Christian in Hattiesburg, teaching 13-
60 and 14-year-olds where to line up on defense. He had once coached
61 people such as Lawrence Taylor and Phil Simms, and now he was
62 coaching kids who did not yet shave. "If I can take a couple of
63 hours each day and contribute something to these kids' lives, why
64 shouldn't I"; and

65 WHEREAS, a few years later Perkins, then in his 70s, came out
66 of retirement and coached Jones Junior College for a couple of
67 seasons. Again, here was a guy who had coached at the highest
68 levels in packed stadiums and on national TV, now coaching before
69 hundreds. Jones went 14-5 over those two seasons, shared the



70 Mississippi Juco South Division title one year, and then won it
71 the next. Perkins seemed to be having more fun then than he had
72 as a Coach for the New York Giants. "This is better, more fun,
73 more rewarding. It's because of these kids. It's because I am
74 watching them grow"; and

75 WHEREAS, we pay tribute and cherish fondly the memory of a
76 legendary Mississippi sports hero who has brought honor to his
77 sport, his university, his community and to the State of
78 Mississippi:

79 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
80 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
81 we do hereby remember the career of legendary college and NFL
82 football player and Coach Ray Perkins from Petal, Mississippi, and
83 extend the sympathy of the Legislature to his bereaved family.

84 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be forwarded to
85 the surviving family of Ray Perkins and be made available to the
86 Capitol Press Corps.

