

By: Representatives Bell (65th), Johnson,  
Clarke, Summers, Brown (70th), Banks, Crudup,  
Stamps, Yates

To: Rules

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 63

1 A RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE JACKSON STATE  
2 UNIVERSITY "TIGERS" FOOTBALL TEAM, HEAD COACH DEION SANDERS AND  
3 THE "TIGERS" COACHING STAFF UPON WINNING THEIR SECOND CONSECUTIVE  
4 SOUTHWESTERN ATHLETIC CONFERENCE (SWAC) CHAMPIONSHIP UPON BECOMING  
5 THE 2022 SWAC CHAMPIONS, AND RECOGNIZING JACKSON STATE  
6 UNIVERSITY'S CONTINUAL FULFILLMENT OF ITS VISION STATEMENT OF  
7 BUILDING UPON ITS HISTORIC MISSION OF PROMOTING AND EMPOWERING  
8 DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AMONG ITS SCHOLARS AND SCHOLAR-ATHLETES  
9 THROUGH INTERDISCIPLINARY AND MULTI-MODAL COLLABORATIVE LEARNING.

10 WHEREAS, the Jackson State University "Tigers" Football Team,  
11 led by "Coach Prime" Deion Sanders and an equally exceptional  
12 coaching staff, reigned supreme during the 2022 season, laying  
13 claim to its second consecutive Southwestern Athletic Conference  
14 (SWAC) Championship, the Tigers' first back-to-back SWAC titles  
15 since 1995-1996; and

16 WHEREAS, after initially clenching the SWAC Championship  
17 during the 2021 gridiron season for the first time since 2007 with  
18 the university's first 11-win season in school history, the 2022  
19 Tigers one-upped their previous season, breaking their own record  
20 by going a perfect 12-0 on the regular season, and 8-0 in  
21 conference division play; and



22           WHEREAS, the Tigers, who had a superior season that was  
23 driven by more than just the yearning to succeed, intensely  
24 amplified all of their hard work, motivation and audacity, which  
25 were so apparent all through the season, for the game that  
26 ultimately separated the gladiators from the civilians, to defeat  
27 Southern University 43-24 at Mississippi Veterans Memorial Stadium  
28 in Jackson, Mississippi, on December 3, 2022, before an exuberant  
29 crowd of 53,754 enthusiastic spectators, and collect the program's  
30 18th SWAC Football Championship, which also berthed the team's  
31 second consecutive bowl appearance at the Cricket Celebration  
32 Bowl; and

33           WHEREAS, striving all season long to be the best football  
34 program in the state, Jackson State University put aside the  
35 excitement, fanfare and attention to focus on the championship  
36 game and prepare as they had throughout the season, and that  
37 strategy, along with the monumental support from the entire  
38 community, which evidenced its devoted belief in "Thee I Love"  
39 through record-breaking game attendance that amassed approximately  
40 501,000 fans throughout the 2022 season of competition, and which  
41 further helped solidify the Tigers' ascent to championship status;  
42 and

43           WHEREAS, bursting with wit and athleticism, the Jackson State  
44 University Tigers Football Team's mental stamina and determination  
45 never waivered from the moment they ran onto the field until the  
46 last down was played scoring 490 points on the season, while only



47 yielding 176 points to their formidable opponents, for an average  
48 of approximately 37.7 points per game; and

49 WHEREAS, during the championship game that kept fans on the  
50 edge of their seats for the entire 60 minutes of electrifying  
51 play, the game's opening 11 minutes set the tone for what was to  
52 follow in the next three quarters as the nation's top-ranked  
53 defense forced three turnovers, made two sacks and following a  
54 three-and-out forced by the JSU defense, the Tigers' offense drove  
55 61 yards in nine plays, as freshman kicker, Alejandro Mata's  
56 22-yard field goal gave Jackson State a 3-0 lead; and

57 WHEREAS, the interception and 37-yard return of a Southern  
58 pass by Herman Smith III, positioned the Tigers at the Jaguars'  
59 one-yard line, which made for an effortless one-yard touchdown run  
60 by Sy'Veon Wilkerson two plays later, followed by a PAT kick that  
61 gave Jackson State a 10-0 lead with 8:26 to play in the first  
62 quarter; and

63 WHEREAS, on the ensuing possession, linebacker Aubrey Miller  
64 Jr.'s sack and forced fumble was recovered by Antonio Doyle, Jr.,  
65 at the Southern 14-yard line, which afforded quarterback Shedeur  
66 Sanders prime opportunity to capitalize on the next play, by  
67 firing a 14-yard touchdown pass to Shane Hooks, and Kevin  
68 Coleman's two-point conversion pass catapulted the Tigers to an  
69 18-0 lead with 6:35 remaining in the first quarter; and

70 WHEREAS, Jackson State made its third takeaway on the next  
71 Southern drive as Baron Hopson's sack and forced fumble was



72 recovered by Justin Ragin at the JSU 42-yard line, allowing the  
73 Tigers to find the end zone once again as Sanders and Hooks  
74 connected on a 40-yard scoring pass, and echoed with a  
75 Sanders-to-Coleman two-point conversion pass, which gave JSU a  
76 26-0 advantage over Southern with 3:51 to play in the opening  
77 period; and

78 WHEREAS, an early score by Southern in the second quarter  
79 only fueled JSU's fire, compelling the Tigers to respond on its  
80 fifth straight possession with a seven-play, 85-yard drive, which  
81 resulted in a 14-yard scoring pass from Sanders to Coleman, and  
82 Mata's extra point boosted the Tigers to a 33-7 lead with 11:25 to  
83 play in the first half; and

84 WHEREAS, after Southern managed to close the gap in the third  
85 quarter, the Tigers, on the prowl, pounced once again to put the  
86 game away for good, as Sanders threw his fourth touchdown pass of  
87 the game, a nine-yard strike to Rico Powers late in the period for  
88 the final margin, yielding the Tigers a 43-24 victory over the  
89 Jaguars, a staunch reminder why Tigers are the "true" kings of the  
90 jungle; and

91 WHEREAS, while the old saying goes, "defense wins  
92 championships," it certainly held true during the championship  
93 game, as the Tigers' defense erected an impenetrable stone wall  
94 that showcased the tactical prowess, stamina and skillsets that  
95 are inherent characteristics to the apex predator for which they  
96 are named; and



97           WHEREAS, the Tigers, who played with nothing but heart and  
98 soul all season, have a very talented and distinguished roster,  
99 and each player made a substantial contribution that led to one of  
100 the most historic seasons in the history of the Tigers football  
101 program, including: J.P. Andrade, Khalil Arrington, Gerardo  
102 Baeza, Kejuan Barbee, Jackson Barry, Tayvion Beasley, Elliot  
103 Blackmon, Isaiah Bolden, Zachary Breaux, Jeremiah Brown, Tyler  
104 Brown, Alvin Brumfield, Kris Cassel, Kevin Coleman, Jr., Dallas  
105 Daniels, Devonta Davis, Jelani Davis, Jurriente Davis, Quaydarius  
106 Davis, Norman Douglas, Jr., Antonio Doyle, Jr., Daelyn Dunn,  
107 Frankie Dunn, Kirk Ford, Jasper Friis, Nyles Gaddy, Willie Gaines,  
108 Charlton Goodell, Deontae Graham, Timontre Graham, Gregory Grate,  
109 Hayden Hagler, Aarion Hartman, Devin Hayes, Evan Henry, Shane  
110 Hooks, Baron Hopson, John Huggins, Jalin Hughes, Jacob Humphrey,  
111 Andre Hunt, Donavan Hunt, Travis Hunter, Marquis Johnson, Sam  
112 Johnson, Caleb Jolivette, Demetri Jordan, Josiah Laban, Santee  
113 Marshall, J.D. Martin, Alejandro Mata, Emari Matthews, Kevin May,  
114 Lane McGregor, Jason Mercier, Aubrey Miller, Jr., Glenn Misiak,  
115 King Mwikuta, Willis Patrick, Dazerick Patton, Kobe Paul, Jacob  
116 Politte, Rico Powers, Justin Ragin, Julius Reynolds, Matthew  
117 Ricciardi-Vitale, Tre'von Riggins, Jency Riley, Trevonte Rucker,  
118 Delano Salgado, Shedeur Sanders, Shilo Sanders, Tayari Sherwood,  
119 Trace Shumans, Cam'Ron Silmon-Craig, Errick Simmons, Christopher  
120 Smith, Julian Smith, Herman Smith III, D.J. Stevens, David  
121 Studstill, Reginald Swinton, Greyson Thompson, Michael Thompson,



122 Tru Thompson, Donald Turley, Kaseem Vauls, Zyon Walker, Amari  
123 Ward, De'Jahn Warren, J.J. Weeks, Malachi Wideman, Ke'Vric  
124 Wiggins, Jr., Sy'veon Wilkerson and Jeremiah Williams; and

125 WHEREAS, the team's statistics were impressive this season,  
126 and there were outstanding performances by individual players, but  
127 the key to the team's remarkable success has been the constant  
128 atmosphere of unity and year-round hard work by the following  
129 talented 19 student-athletes who were named to all-conference  
130 teams as All-SWAC honorees, including: first-team recipients,  
131 Shedeur Sanders, Aubrey Miller, Jr., Dallas Daniels, Shane Hooks,  
132 Willis Patrick, Tyler Brown, Cam'ron Silmon-Craig and Alejandro  
133 Mata; second-team recipients, Travis Hunter, Sy'Veon Wilkerson,  
134 D.J. Stevens, Devin Hayes, Justin Ragin, Nyles Gaddy, Shilo  
135 Sanders and Isaiah Bolden; third-team recipients, Jurriente Davis  
136 and John Huggins; fourth-team recipient, Jacob Politte; in  
137 addition to Shedeur Sanders being named Offensive Player of the  
138 Year, Aubrey Miller, Jr., being named Defensive Player of the  
139 Year, and Kevin Coleman, Jr., being named Freshman of the Year;  
140 and

141 WHEREAS, Head Coach Deion Sanders, who doubled up on being  
142 named SWAC Coach of the Year for the second consecutive year,  
143 along with an elite coaching staff who are personally vested in  
144 the academic and athletic success of each player, superbly coached  
145 and tremendously inspired the Tigers and broadened their knowledge  
146 of the game while refining their skills in execution; and



147           WHEREAS, the level of accountability to which each player is  
148 held has manifested a culture of success that has become  
149 demonstrative both on and off the field, and not only with the  
150 football team, but through the entire Tigers' athletics program,  
151 which leads the Southwestern Athletic Conference, and the State of  
152 Mississippi in the latest NCAA's Graduation Success Rate (GSR)  
153 report announced in November, posting an overall GSR of 90%, the  
154 highest in the SWAC, and tied with Ole Miss and Mississippi State  
155 for the highest in the state; and

156           WHEREAS, despite the challenges of the pandemic and endemic  
157 water and infrastructure woes, JSU's student-athletes, staff and  
158 coaches remained steadfast in their focus on the academic mission  
159 of becoming champions in the classroom first, which has enabled  
160 them to continually excel in all aspects of the collegiate  
161 experience, which in turn further impacts their posture for their  
162 individual career successes moving forward, as more than 150  
163 student-athletes attained at least a 3.0 grade-point average, with  
164 35 student-athletes with a 4.0 GPA, and a collective 3.101 grade  
165 point average in the Fall 2022 semester, which produced 28  
166 graduates; and

167           WHEREAS, building on its historic mission of empowering a  
168 culturally diverse cohort of students to become leaders, Jackson  
169 State University has become recognized as a challenging, yet  
170 nurturing, state-of-the-art technologically-infused intellectual  
171 community that promotes student and faculty engagement in creative



172 research, participation in interdisciplinary and  
173 multi-instructional/organizational collaborative learning teams,  
174 while serving the global community; and

175 WHEREAS, the symphony of diversity and inclusion that is  
176 being masterfully orchestrated by the administration of Jackson  
177 State University has laid the historical foundation for a student  
178 body that is a beautiful tapestry of ethnicities and cultures  
179 intricately woven together into a masterpiece that is  
180 representative of the Mississippi we aspire daily to achieve and  
181 utilize as a branding trademark to highlight the greatness and  
182 limitless potential for success the Hospitality State has to  
183 offer; and

184 WHEREAS, in a testament to the fulfillment of its platform of  
185 diversity and inclusion JSU made history on April 5, 2022, with  
186 the Sonic Boom of the South's bestowing the J5 head drum major  
187 honor for the 2022-2023 season upon senior Marvin Garcia Meda, as  
188 the first Hispanic head drum major after initially becoming the  
189 first Hispanic student to hold a highly-coveted position as a  
190 member of the energetic, high-stepping and  
191 synchronously-choreographed quintet as a sophomore, and sophomore  
192 Priscilla Marin, now in her second year as the first Hispanic  
193 performer of the Prancing J-Settes in the institution's history,  
194 both of whom are first-generation Jackson State University  
195 students; and





196 WHEREAS, the beauty of Jackson State University is the  
197 familial bond that was established at its 1877 founding as Natchez  
198 Seminary by the American Baptist Home Mission Society for the  
199 moral, religious and intellectual improvement of African  
200 Americans, and which prevails in perpetuity through the  
201 dauntlessly enduring commitment to those core values while  
202 expanding its curriculum to meet the ambitious educational needs  
203 of a progressive student body whose affinity for their beloved  
204 university is entrenched in the popular ascribed alumni motto,  
205 "Thee I Love," which is gleaned from the lyrics of its alma mater  
206 "Jackson Fair"; and

207 WHEREAS, it is the policy of the House of Representatives to  
208 recognize and commend outstanding Mississippi student-athletes,  
209 especially those such as the Jackson State University "Tigers"  
210 Football Team, whose hard work and perseverance brings honor to  
211 their school, their community and to the State of Mississippi:

212 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
213 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby  
214 recognize and commend the Jackson State University Tigers Football  
215 Team, Head Coach Deion Sanders and the Tigers coaching staff upon  
216 winning their second consecutive Southwestern Athletic Conference  
217 (SWAC) Championship, upon becoming the 2022 SWAC champions,  
218 recognizing Jackson State University's continual fulfillment of  
219 its vision statement of building upon its historic mission of  
220 promoting and empowering diversity and inclusion among its



221 scholars and scholar-athletes through interdisciplinary and  
222 multi-modal collaborative learning, and extend to them best wishes  
223 for continued success in all their future athletic, academic and  
224 career endeavors.

225 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be  
226 furnished to Head Coach T.C. Taylor, President Thomas K. Hudson  
227 and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

