

By: Senator(s) Jordan, Norwood, Butler,
Blackmon, Jackson, Thomas, Blount, Brumfield,
Frazier, Simmons (13th), Turner-Ford,
Chassaniol, Horhn

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 117

1 A RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE SINCEREST CONDOLENCES OF THE
2 MISSISSIPPI SENATE TO THE SURVIVING FAMILY OF FORMER JACKSON STATE
3 FOOTBALL STAR AND MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE FOOTBALL COACH ARCHIE
4 "THE GUNSLINGER" COOLEY.

5 WHEREAS, we join the alumni and fans of Jackson State
6 University and Mississippi Valley State University football in
7 mourning the passing of a legendary football player and coach.
8 Former Jackson State football player Archie Cooley, who later went
9 on to Coach at Mississippi Valley State, passed away on April 18,
10 2024. He was 85; and

11 WHEREAS, Archie Cooley was known as the "The Gunslinger" and
12 during his time at Mississippi Valley State introduced his
13 innovative "Satellite Express" offense. The offense featured a
14 no-huddle look with five wide receivers and showcased Quarterbacks
15 Willie Totten and Jerry Rice. Rice would go on to a stellar
16 career with the San Francisco 49ers, election to the Pro Football
17 Hall of Fame and is considered one of the greatest receivers in
18 the history of the NFL; and



19 WHEREAS, Cooley was born in Sumrall and raised in Laurel
20 where he attended Oak Park High School; and

21 WHEREAS, Cooley played for Jackson State from 1959-1961 and
22 was Captain of the team. He started at linebacker and center for
23 Coach John Merritt. Cooley graduated in 1962; and

24 WHEREAS, Coach Cooley's first coaching job was at Southside
25 High School in Heidelberg, where he worked for seven years. After
26 two seasons as an Assistant Coach at Alcorn State and time at
27 Tennessee State, Cooley got his big break at Mississippi Valley
28 State University (MVSU); and

29 WHEREAS, Cooley's record at MVSU was 42-27-2 and went on to
30 lead the University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff to a 27-13-2 record.
31 He was out of coaching before taking over at Paul Quinn
32 University. His career record was 83-78-5; and

33 WHEREAS, in 2007, Archie Cooley was inducted into the
34 Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC) Hall of Fame; and

35 WHEREAS, Coach Cooley, the cowboy hat-wearing coach, was
36 Southwestern Athletic Conference royalty in the 1960s. Cooley's
37 football teams were putting up video game numbers before video
38 games really became a thing. Mind-boggling scores just kept
39 popping up, one Saturday after another, as Cooley's Delta Devils,
40 featuring the oh-so-potent tandem of Jerry Rice (nicknamed
41 "World") and Willie Totten (nicknamed "Satellite"), lit up
42 scoreboards all across the SWAC and throughout the South. Fans
43 and defensive coordinators would look in bewilderment when they



44 saw four wide receivers lined up on one side of the formation and
45 one on the other. Much of what you see on the football field
46 today is because of what Cooley implemented in the early 1980s;
47 and

48 WHEREAS, "Coach Cooley was a trailblazing pioneer and the
49 tremendous impact he had on the game of football and the countless
50 number of lives he touched will be forever remembered," SWAC
51 Commissioner Charles McClelland said; and

52 WHEREAS, Jackson State Athletic Director Ashley Robinson said
53 Cooley was a legend in the SWAC. "He not only meant a lot to
54 Jackson State, but to every school in the conference," said
55 Robinson. "What he was able to do with the game of football and
56 implement the changes that are still around today, speaks volumes.
57 His legacy as a coach will live on forever, and his place here at
58 Jackson State as a player will last forever":

59 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
60 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby extend the sincerest condolences of
61 the Mississippi Senate to the surviving family of former Jackson
62 State Football Star and Mississippi Valley State Football Coach
63 Archie "The Gunslinger" Cooley, and recognize his legendary
64 position in Mississippi football history.

65 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
66 the surviving family of Archie Cooley, forwarded to the President
67 of Jackson State University and Mississippi Valley State
68 University, and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

