Chapter No. 2019
15/HR03/R865
NC / CS

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 40

Originated in House _____ Clerk

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 40

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING THE 2014 NEWTON COUNTY ACADEMY GENERALS FOOTBALL TEAM AND VETERAN HEAD COACH ROBERT ROBERTS FOR WINNING THE MISSISSIPPI ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS CLASS A STATE CHAMPIONSHIP.

WHEREAS, the Newton County Academy Generals Football Team clinched the championship victory 7-6 against the University Academy of Central Louisiana Lions Football Team in an epic, hard-fought defensive battle that had fans on the edge of their seats until the last down was played in Robinson-Hale Stadium on the campus of Mississippi College in Clinton, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, finishing with an 11-3 record, the Generals, who had a superior season that was driven by more than just the yearning to succeed, intensely amplified all of their hard-work, motivation and audacity, which were so apparent all through the season, for the game that ultimately separated the men from the boys to collect the school's first Mississippi Association of Independent Schools Class A State Football Championship; and

WHEREAS, the grueling championship game was unlike any other game the Generals had played because throughout their regular season, the Generals had become accustomed to long touchdown runs, key tackles, impressive comebacks, clutch performances, and delivering punishment, but the championship game was a test of the true Newton County Academy stamina, as it consisted of brutal physicality in the trenches and required the Generals to endure some of the punishment they had been handing out all season in order to be triumphant and capture the most esteemed and cherished honor throughout the football programs in the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools; and

WHEREAS, the hard work and determination of the parsimonious defense, who held the Lions to just 106 yards of total offense in the game and came together to stop the powerful Lions when the game was on the line, reiterated the age-old saying, "Defense wins championships."; and

WHEREAS, the championship game strategy was for the team to rely heavily on their proficient and swift running game, but the Generals miraculously broke a scoreless tie two plays into the second half when Jordan Jones made an astonishing over-the-shoulder catch of a Braden Smith pass and stole 55 yards for a touchdown that framed the difference between victory and defeat for the Generals; and

WHEREAS, the all-important extra point attempt by Dustin Alsup, whose swift and precise leg was a huge asset to the

Generals' successful season, provided Newton County Academy with a 7-0 lead; and

WHEREAS, deep into the 3rd quarter, when the Lions were threatening to score, Newton County Academy defensive end Brandon Horn made a ferociously pivotal play when he abruptly raced into the Lions' backfield, the enemy's territory, and overcame and tackled the quarterback for a 13-yard loss, which turned the ball over to the Generals on downs; and

WHEREAS, after the Lions scored on a short run late in the 4th quarter, the Generals' Brandon Harrison and Dustin Alsup fervently defended their field and heroically blocked the 2-point conversion run a half-yard short of the goal line to secure the mighty Generals their first state championship victory; and

WHEREAS, the Generals' competent and speedy offense, who constantly played with clear eyes, full hearts, and unimaginable amounts of strength throughout the season, only needed 81 rushing yards and 136 yards of total offense to prevail over the Lions, with Dustin Alsup leading the charge by amassing 48 rushing yards on 16 attempts, the most rushing yards in the game, while Jordan Jones had 14 vital carries for 42 yards; and

WHEREAS, throughout their season of play, the Generals faced off with some of the state's best contenders on the gridiron, but persevered to make their presence and talent known as gladiators of football under the Friday night lights; and

WHEREAS, the 2014 Newton County Academy team's statistics were impressive, and there were outstanding performances by individual players, but the key to this team's consistent success is the constant team atmosphere and year-round hard work; and

WHEREAS, the Newton County Academy Generals, who played with nothing but heart and soul all season, have a very talented and distinguished roster, and each player made a substantial contribution during the season that led to the most historic season in the history of Newton County Academy, which formed its first football team in 1972; and

WHEREAS, the fans, basked in a rainbow of red, white and gold, rallied behind their beloved Generals, filling the stands with their bodies as well as their spirit and encouragement each Friday night and, actually unable to contain their excitement and enthusiasm any longer, spilled out of the stands to cheer along the fence behind the Newton County Academy bench at Robinson-Hale Stadium for the championship game; and

WHEREAS, the 2014 state championship Generals football team also received glowing support from all of the players who had come before them, who had played hundreds of Friday night games and sweated through countless, hard-hitting hours in practice hoping that the long-established dream of Newton County Academy winning the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools Class A State Football Championship Game would become a reality; and

WHEREAS, the 2014 Newton County Academy roster, filled with players whose dedication and athletic prowess helped them win the championship game, is comprised of the following athletes: Chance Collins, Jordan Smith, Hunter Terrell, Garrett Hollingsworth, Hunter Parker, Braden Smith, Andy Barnett, Zach Joyner, Dustin Alsup, Jordan Jones, Ethan Parker, Braxton Rose, Gunnar Bounds, Joshua Terrell, Bailey McDill, Logan Tadlock, Ty Alderman, Trey Kellum, Dalton Hollingsworth, Brandon Harrison, Patrick Bounds, Will Boswell, Dawson Blackledge, Matt Moore, Chris Cook, Hayden Pace, Cole Killen, Ashton Crosby, Richard Horton and Brandon Horn; and

WHEREAS, the cheerleaders, comprised of Megan Todd, Amanda Creekmore, Jodi Bailey, Cheyenne Kelly, Brittany Harrison, Baleigh Ellis, Alexis Tindall, Bethany Wellerman, Haley Griffin and mascot, Gigi Hitt, helped crown the Generals as state champions by constantly rooting for the players and encouraging the fans to emit their pride and exaltation for the players on Friday nights; and

WHEREAS, the assistant coaches, who helped the players reach their fullest potential on and off the field are as follows: Rob Roberts, Tommy Mathews, James Williams, Kelly Alderman and Tanner Smith; and

WHEREAS, the Generals have been superbly coached and inspired by Head Coach Robert Roberts, who has broadened the Generals'

knowledge of the game and refined their skills in execution during his nine year tenure at Newton County Academy; and

WHEREAS, Coach Roberts continues to build upon the legacy of superior play and true sportsmanship forged by the tenacious and undaunted spirit of each team member, as evidenced in his ability to produce high caliber players and plays and by the team's successful season; and

WHEREAS, the team's journey to the state title game was an inspiring one, as the Generals played through much adversity during the year and rallied around teammate Brandon Harrison, who lost his older brother Brad to an untimely death just before the season began; and

WHEREAS, after Brad Harrison's death, the Generals began attending church together on Sundays, and they have since attended several church services around the county together, something players and coaches said has made a difference on and off the field; and

WHEREAS, Newton County Academy dedicated the season to Brad Harrison and retired his jersey number, which fatefully was number 7, the exact number of points the 2014 Newton County Academy Generals Football Team needed to score to win its first Mississippi Association of Independent Schools Class A State Football Championship Game; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to recognize and honor the achievements of student athletes such as the Newton

County Academy Generals Football Team who have brought honor to their school, their community, and to the State of Mississippi:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby commend and congratulate the Newton County Academy Generals Football Team and veteran Head Coach Robert Roberts for winning the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools Class A State Football Championship, their first state title, and extend best wishes to the team and coaches for continued success in all of their future athletic and academic endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be furnished to Head Coach Robert Roberts and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
February 12, 2015

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
February 24, 2015

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE