Chapter No. 2022
16/HR43/R1017
SW / GV

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 24

Originated in House _____ Clerk

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 24

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING THE SUMRALL HIGH SCHOOL BOBCATS BASEBALL TEAM UPON WINNING THE MISSISSIPPI HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION CLASS 3A STATE BASEBALL CHAMPIONSHIP.

WHEREAS, the Sumrall Bobcats can only be described as utterly dominating on May 23, 2015, when they won their fifth Mississippi High School Activities Association Class 3A State Baseball Championship, having previously won four consecutive championships from 2008-2011 and seven South State titles in the past eight years; and

WHEREAS, the team was incredibly motivated this year, namely due to a tremendous group of seniors who experienced winning South State so many times that it was commonplace, but had yet to go to a state championship; and

WHEREAS, never taking victory for granted, the Bobcats with a 31-4 record opened the state championship series against Belmont, a team competing in the state championship for the very first time; and

WHEREAS, Head Coach Larry Knight started a dynasty within his own family with all three of his sons matriculating through the Sumrall baseball team, one a current senior and the younger a valuable player in his own right; and

WHEREAS, a team with an outstanding arm, the Bobcats have six pitchers who Coach Knight would feel confident in sending to the mound in any given situation, with an earned-run average of 1.41, making this selection one of his toughest decisions during every game of this season; and

WHEREAS, when Coach Knight finds players who are on the top and at peak performance and condition, he relies on them, and Bobcats junior outfielder, Trace Jordan, is just such a competitor, batting .434 with seven home runs, 17 doubles and 51 RBIs this season; and

WHEREAS, this epic season was only diminished by four losses, and this most excellent record is due to the fact that Coach Knight trained his team with difficult nonregion play that included the Louisville Slugger Select Classic in Atlanta; and

WHEREAS, the second game of the Class 3A State Championship against Belmont was a dominating 6-0 victory that can be credited to Drake Nightengale who demanded the ball from Coach Knight prior to the game; and

WHEREAS, the placement and success of Nightengale truly is astonishing as this was his first start of the season, but Coach

Knight promised that when the game was do-or-die, he would call on Nightengale; and

WHEREAS, after battling through the season, the Bobcats showed up at the series focused and ready to "play hard, play gritty" as described by Nightengale, understanding that no team can win simply by showing up; and

WHEREAS, on the final night of the state championship series, Joseph McLaurin rescued the team from a bases-loaded jam in the first inning and proceeded to cruise the rest of the way through his natural drive and determination, carrying the Bobcats to a 7-2 victory at Trustmark Park; and

WHEREAS, also earning praise for this finale, Trace Jordan drove in four runs with a double and three singles, and Alex Knight had two runs on a single; and

WHEREAS, as nerves flared, players can attest that a focus on the fundamentals of the game is what carried them through, including knowing when to make bunts if necessary, and this basic technique by Jordan moved runners into scoring positions and gave confidence to the entire team and staff; and

WHEREAS, after the game concluded with such a decisive victory, the seniors were at a loss for words, filled with emotion as they realized that after two years of making it to the state championship but not capitalizing and winning, they finally got into the game, relaxed, had some of the best fun of their lives and won, exactly like they knew they could; and

WHEREAS, the 2015-2016 season will be a new journey for the Sumrall Bobcats, after a triumphant end to their season; Sumrall will be moving up to the Class 4A Division which will mean new competitive schools and challenges, but also new opportunities; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to recognize and honor the achievements of student athletes such as the Sumrall High School Bobcats Baseball 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 Sumrall High School Bobcats Baseball Team and Head Coach Larry Knight for winning the Mississippi High School Activities Association Class 3A State Baseball Championship, their fifth title in eight years, 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 Larry Knight, Sumrall High School and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
February 8, 2016

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
February 11, 2016

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE