

Chapter No. 2172

16/SS01/R1083

aj lalhc

***SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 584***

Originated in Senate

Tracy Welch

Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 584

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING SARAH THOMAS OF BRANDON, MISSISSIPPI, AS THE NFL'S FIRST FULL-TIME FEMALE OFFICIAL AND AS A PIONEER IN FEMALE FOOTBALL OFFICIATING.

WHEREAS, history was made during the August 15, 2015, preseason game between the Arizona Cardinals and Kansas City Chiefs when Sarah Thomas made her debut as the NFL's first full-time female official; and

WHEREAS, Thomas began her officiating career in 1996, when she attended a meeting of the Gulf Coast Football Officials Association. She worked her first varsity high school game in 1999. In 2006, Gerry Austin, Conference USA's Coordinator of Officials and a former NFL official, invited her to an official's camp. Austin was impressed with her skills and hired her for the Conference USA staff. In 2007, Sarah became the first woman to officiate a major college football game, working a game between Memphis and Jacksonville State. On November 12, 2011, Sarah Thomas became the first woman to officiate in a Big Ten stadium, working as a line judge when Northwestern hosted Rice; and

WHEREAS, during the 2009 season, Thomas was one of five female officials in major college football and the only one at the Football Bowl Subdivision level. She was assigned to a crew and given a full schedule of 11 games. At the end of the season, she was selected to work the Little Caesars Pizza Bowl between Marshall and Ohio, making her the first woman to officiate a bowl game. Regarding her presence, Marshall running back and game MVP Martin Ward said, "I noticed her before the game, but that was it. Once the game started, she was just doing the job that the line judge does in every game we play"; and

WHEREAS, Thomas has officiated United Football League Games, and in 2010 worked the League Championship Game. In 2013, Thomas became one of 21 finalists in contention for a permanent NFL officiating position. Thomas worked New Orleans Saints scrimmages, and was part of the NFL officiating development program, spending three days at the Indianapolis Colts minicamp; and

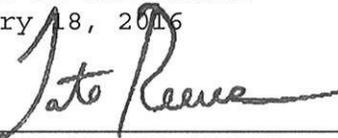
WHEREAS, on April 8, 2015, the NFL officially announced that Thomas would become the first full-time female official in NFL history, and was assigned to officiating Crew Head Referee Pet Morelli. Thomas made her NFL regular season debut in a game between the Kansas City Chiefs and the Houston Texans at NRG Stadium on September 13, 2015. Thomas' NFL officiating uniform number is 153; and

WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we commend this Mississippi citizen who is a pioneer in her field and has brought honor to her family, her community and to the State of Mississippi:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby recognize Sarah Thomas of Brandon, Mississippi, as the NFL's first full-time female official and as a pioneer in female football officiating, and extend the best wishes of the Legislature to Sarah and her family as her landmark career continues.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to Sarah Thomas, forwarded to the NFL corporate office and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
February 18, 2016



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
February 21, 2016



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES