

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 197

By Floyd

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize legendary University of Tennessee swimming coach Ray Bussard.

WHEREAS, the citizens of this great State and their elected representatives are extremely proud to honor one of the most accomplished and renowned coaches in intercollegiate swimming history; and

WHEREAS, former University of Tennessee swim team head coach Ray Bussard is one such estimable coach who served with distinction during his legendary career that spanned twenty-one seasons; and

WHEREAS, no coach in the history of NCAA swimming has cast such an extraordinary presence over intercollegiate swimming as has Coach Bussard; and

WHEREAS, while coaching at the University of Tennessee and competing in the Southeastern Conference (SEC), his winning percentage of .926 and career record of 252-20, still stands as one of the most phenomenal coaching efforts of any athletic program in the SEC; and

WHEREAS, growing up in the mountains of Virginia during the Great Depression, Coach Bussard was taught the value of education and service to others at an early age; and

WHEREAS, while pursuing his education, he attended Ohio University, the College of William and Mary, and Bridgewater College; upon graduation from Bridgewater College, where he excelled in athletics by lettering in football, basketball, and track, Ray Bussard entered the coaching profession; and

WHEREAS, beginning his craft in the high school ranks at City High School and Red Bank High School in Chattanooga, he accrued a 43-24-12 record during eight years as a

football coach, a 241-99 record during eighteen years as a basketball coach, a 128-52 record during nine years as a baseball coach, and a staggering 172-7 record during eighteen years as a track and field coach; and

WHEREAS, the honors, records, and championships Coach Bussard accrued during his high school coaching days are surpassed only by his accomplishments as the head coach of the University of Tennessee swim team; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as head coach of the University of Tennessee swim team, Coach Bussard notched eighty-five consecutive dual meet wins, eight SEC championships, nine undefeated teams, two NCAA national championship runner-ups in 1973 and 1976, and one NCAA national championship in 1978; under his guidance, the University of Tennessee swim program became one of the most dominant swim programs in intercollegiate athletics; and

WHEREAS, Coach Bussard established himself as a preeminent figure in swimming athletics and is renowned both in this country and abroad; he coached the United States (U.S.) swim team to victories over the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) in dual meets in 1978 and 1982; also coaching the U.S. swim team to victory at the 1979 PAN AM meet and the 1983 Pacific Games, Coach Bussard was named as one of the coaches for the 1984 U.S. Olympic swim team; and

WHEREAS, perhaps the most fitting compliment Coach Bussard has received comes from the records his former swimmers have amassed; Coach Bussard's quickness control system has produced fourteen NCAA gold medal winners, six world record holders, nineteen American record holders, and two Olympic gold medal winners; over two dozen of his former swimmers have continued his legacy as coaches, including current University of Tennessee swim coach, John Trembley; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to honors and accolades, Coach Ray Bussard evidenced an unswerving commitment to excellence that earned him many awards and decorations, including NCAA Swim Coach of the Year in 1972 and 1978, SEC Swim Coach of the Year in 1972, 1974, 1976, 1977 and 1978, National Intercollegiate and Scholastic Swim Coach of the Year in 1984, and the Bridgewater College Distinguished Alumni Award in 1987; and

WHEREAS, his heralded accomplishments and exceptional career have been recognized by his induction into the Tennessee Swimming Hall of Fame in 1984, Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame in 1988, Bridgewater College Athletic Hall of Fame in 1994, International Swimming Hall of Fame in 1999, Virginia Sports Hall of Fame in 2000, and American Swimming Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2008; he is a charter member of the “Tennessee Legends”, and the Ray Bussard Intercollegiate Pool at the University of Tennessee Student Aquatic Center was named in his honor; and

WHEREAS, Coach Bussard’s influence and numerous contributions to swimming athletics was recognized by the Tennessee State High School Swimming and Diving Association when the team championship award was named in his honor; and

WHEREAS, Coach Bussard is one of the most respected and esteemed figures in intercollegiate and international swim competition, his coaching skills and abilities have garnered him the admiration of swimming purists throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, his momentous achievements aside, Coach Bussard is most proud of the love and support of his wife, Ruth Bussard; and their daughters, Terry B. Hughes, Christy R. Bussard, and Jacqueline B. Bertucci; another daughter, Catherine Ray Bussard has passed from this life; and

WHEREAS, Coach Bussard has always been humble about his much deserved fame; the Bussard family established the “Ruth and Ray Bussard Baton of Victory”, which is presented each year to the winning coach of the NCAA Division I Men’s and Women’s Championship Team; and

WHEREAS, this legislative body is especially proud to pause in its deliberations to recognize this esteemed man and his extraordinary life and coaching accomplishments; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and recognize legendary University of Tennessee swimming coach Ray Bussard for his many accomplishments and contributions to swimming

athletics in the State of Tennessee, applaud him for his vaunted level of success and his dedication to excellence, and extend to him our best wishes for every continued success in all his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.