

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 254

By Love

A RESOLUTION to recognize head coach Larry Joe Inman and the Tennessee State University women's basketball team upon completion of an extraordinary season.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are pleased to specially honor and commend those successful sports teams that, through their magnificent exploits, bring honor to Tennessee and serve as exceptional ambassadors of this State; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee State University (TSU) women's basketball team is one such estimable team that achieved an extraordinary level of success during the 2014–2015 season, establishing a record of eighteen wins against thirteen losses on their way to claiming the Ohio Valley Conference (OVC) Championship, their first title in twenty years, and advancing to the NCAA Tournament; and

WHEREAS, with their first winning record since the 2008–2009 season, the Lady Tigers rolled through the OVC Tournament, prevailing over Morehead State (81–66) and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (71–59) to reach the championship game against the four-time defending OVC Champion University of Tennessee at Martin; and

WHEREAS, the TSU Tigers outscored the opponent 11–7 in overtime to triumph over the Lady Skyhawks (64–60), extending the program's winning streak to a record ten games; and

WHEREAS, after advancing to the NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament, the Lady Tigers fell to the number two nationally ranked Kentucky Wildcats in a hard-fought game; and

WHEREAS, the Lady Tigers finished the season averaging 66.9 points per game while shooting 38.1 percent from the field; they averaged 2.9 blocks per game and forced opponents into 20.2 turnovers per outing. In addition, they led the OVC in offensive rebounding (15.8) and

steals (9.7) and ranked second in turnover margin (+3.0) and offensive rebounding percentage (.359); and

WHEREAS, many members of the team had successful seasons. Among them, Brianna Lawrence was named the Most Valuable Player of the OVC Tournament after scoring twenty-two points in the championship game, and she led the team and ranked fourth in the OVC in steals and tenth in the OVC in three-point field goals made; Chelsea Hudson, Rachel Allen, and Brianna Lawrence were named to the OVC All-Tournament team; Chelsea Hudson ranked among the top in four OVC categories: offensive rebounding (fourth), overall rebounding (fifth), scoring (tenth), and defensive rebounding (eleventh), eclipsed the 1,000-point milestone this season, and is now ranked tenth among TSU's all-time scoring leaders; Rachel Allen ranked third in TSU's all-time career assists, third in three-point field goal percentage, and thirteenth in steals; and Imani Davis ranked thirteenth in the OVC in steals per game; and

WHEREAS, displaying great sportsmanship and outstanding character, the members of the Tennessee State University women's basketball team conducted themselves in a manner appropriate to the integrity of the State of Tennessee all season and during a valiant effort in the NCAA Tournament; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee State University women's basketball team includes seniors Briana Morrow, Rachel Allen, Chelsea Hudson, and Lateasha Hill; junior Brianna Lawrence; sophomores Diamond Beatty, Imani Davis, Jemilah Leonard, Alexis Haddock, and Jayda Johnson; and freshmen Tia Wooten, Michelle Cox, Markayla Parker, and Samantha Palma; and

WHEREAS, this extraordinary basketball program has been shaped and forged by nationally acclaimed coach Larry Joe Inman, who marks his third year as head coach of the Lady Tigers this year; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the peerless leadership of coach Inman, Tennessee State's outstanding staff includes assistant coaches Joe Bonham, Chelsia Lymon, and Le'Coe Willingham, director of basketball operations Josh Cooperwood, and graduate assistant Jasbriell Swain; and

WHEREAS, the women's basketball team at Tennessee State University epitomizes all that is good in today's student-athlete, as they have achieved a premier level of success in competition while exhibiting the highest degree of character both on and off the court; and

WHEREAS, the perseverance, determination, work ethic, and talent of this group of young women not only made possible an extraordinary basketball season, but also surely bode well for their success in every future enterprise; and

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly find it appropriate to acknowledge and applaud the Tennessee State Lady Tigers for winning the 2014–2015 OVC Championship, for qualifying for the NCAA Tournament, and for serving as examples of the exceptional quality of Tennessee's student-athletes; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby congratulate head coach Larry Joe Inman and the members of the Tennessee State University women's basketball team on their outstanding 2014–2015 season and wish them every success in all 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.