

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 859

By Hardaway

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend retired NBA All-Star and Coach Anfernee “Penny” Hardaway and the 2011-12 Lester Middle School boys’ basketball team upon winning the 2012 Small Schools Tennessee State Championship.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those volunteers who have performed their duties with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm and who, through their magnificent exploits, have brought honor to this State; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable coach is Anfernee “Penny” Hardaway, former University of Memphis All-American and retired NBA All-Star, coach, philanthropist, and mentor, who recently led the Lester Middle School Lions basketball team to victory at the 2012 Small Schools Tennessee State Championship; and

WHEREAS, a Memphis native and former student of Lester Middle School, Anfernee “Penny” Hardaway was eager to volunteer his time and talent as a mentor to these exceptional young players; and

WHEREAS, with his donation of custom uniforms and Chris Bosh Max Hyperdunks sneakers in the team colors of black and yellow, he boosted team morale and provided the necessary equipment for the Lester Lions to dominate on the court; and

WHEREAS, when Head Coach Desmond Merriwether had to take medical leave, Coach Hardaway took up the torch and led the Lions past various obstacles and through numerous comebacks to become the top team among small schools in the State; and

WHEREAS, beginning the fourth quarter of the championship game fifteen points behind Fayette East, the Lester Lions heeded the inspiring advice and encouragement of Coach Hardaway and managed to regain the lead; and

WHEREAS, Nick Merriwether, son of the head coach, scored several three-pointers, Reggie Green, Most Outstanding Player, scored twenty points and collected fourteen rebounds, and Robert Washington scored sixteen points and collected thirteen rebounds, leading the team to a close 58-55 win over their opponents; and

WHEREAS, the valiant effort of every member of the Lester Middle School Lions basketball team resulted in a successful season capped with the 2012 Small Schools Tennessee State Championship title; and

WHEREAS, the flagless faith and determination of Coach Anfernee “Penny” Hardaway inspired in these young players the passion, drive, and love of the game that is essential to success both on and off the court; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and commend retired NBA All-Star, philanthropist, mentor, and Coach Anfernee “Penny” Hardaway for his honorable and astute service, whereby Coach Hardaway unselfishly “gives back” to the Lester Middle School Lions basketball team; congratulate them upon winning the 2012 Small Schools Tennessee State Championship; and wish them the best in every future endeavor.

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