

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 948

By Behn

A RESOLUTION to honor the Nashville Predators on the occasion of their twenty-fifth anniversary season.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly is pleased to recognize an organization that has brought great joy to the patrons of 501 Broadway and hockey fans worldwide during the past twenty-five years; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, the Nashville Predators became the National Hockey League's (NHL's) twenty-seventh franchise, debuting at home on October 10 of that year; since that fateful day, hockey history has been rewritten, as a small-market Sunbelt team has attained excellence with the help of a decided home-ice advantage fueled by enthusiastic fans from across the Midstate and beyond; and

WHEREAS, in their first twenty-four seasons, the Predators qualified for the NHL Stanley Cup playoffs fifteen times, and from 2015 to 2022 they qualified for the playoffs for eight consecutive years, which streak included their appearance in the 2017 Stanley Cup Final; and

WHEREAS, playing in the four-team Central Division, Nashville posted 63 points in its inaugural season, earning respect and admiration from their opponents and fans alike for Coach Barry Trotz's rough-and-tumble style of play that stressed hustle and team work over individual achievement; and

WHEREAS, during the 2003-2004 season, the Predators compiled their first winning season, racking up 91 points; in only their sixth season, they qualified for the Stanley Cup playoffs for the first time in franchise history, and in game one, Adam Hall scored Nashville's first-ever playoff goal; and

WHEREAS, 2005-2006 was Nashville's first 100-point season, as the Predators finished the regular season with 106 points and again qualified for the playoffs; and

WHEREAS, the Predators recorded the franchise's first 50-win season in 2006-2007 and compiled 110 points, qualifying for the playoffs for the third consecutive season; and

WHEREAS, in 2007-2008, Nashville qualified for the playoffs for the fourth consecutive season but could not get over the hump against the eventual Stanley Cup champions; and

WHEREAS, after a one-year hiatus, the Predators returned to the playoffs in 2009-2010 by posting their third 100-point season in five years; and

WHEREAS, in 2010-2011, Nashville posted 99 regular-season points and defeated the Anaheim Ducks in the Western Conference Quarterfinals to claim the first playoff series victory in franchise history; and

WHEREAS, the Predators recorded 104 points in the 2011-2012 regular season and defeated the Detroit Red Wings in a five-game Western Conference Quarterfinals series to advance to the Western Conference Semifinals for the second consecutive year; and

WHEREAS, after a two-year absence from the playoffs, Nashville returned in full force for the 2014-2015 campaign, compiling 104 points and beginning an eight-year streak of playoff qualification; and

WHEREAS, in addition to hosting the NHL All-Star Game for the first time, the Predators recorded 96 points and defeated the Anaheim Ducks in the Pacific Division Semifinals in the 2015-2016 season; and

WHEREAS, despite entering the playoffs as the lowest-seeded of the sixteen teams in 2016-2017, the Predators swept the top-seeded Chicago Blackhawks in the Central Division Semifinals and defeated the St. Louis Blues in the Central Division Final to reach the Western Conference Final for the first time in franchise history; and

WHEREAS, defeating the Anaheim Ducks in six games in the Western Conference Final, Nashville advanced to the Stanley Cup Final for the first time in their eighteenth season of play; and

WHEREAS, in 2017-2018, the Predators' recorded their best regular season ever with 117 points, thus winning the Presidents' Trophy for the first time in franchise history; they then proceeded to best the Colorado Avalanche in the Central Semifinals; and

WHEREAS, the Predators claimed their second consecutive Central Division title in 2018-2019 with 100 points, qualifying for the playoffs for the fifth consecutive season; and

WHEREAS, Nashville also qualified for the playoffs in the COVID-19-affected seasons of 2019-2020 and 2020-2021; and

WHEREAS, in 2021-2022, the Predators posted 97 points to qualify for the playoffs as the second Wild Card in the Western Conference; and

WHEREAS, during the team's twenty-five years in the NHL, Nashville has enjoyed the leadership of seven captains, the first being Tom Fitzgerald, who was followed by the late Greg Johnson, who holds the franchise record for most short-handed goals; gifted defenseman, Kimmo Timonen; Jason Arnott; Shea Weber, who holds the Predators record for most power play goals; Mike Fisher; and the legendary Roman Josi, franchise recordholder for most assists and most points; and

WHEREAS, for a quarter of a century, Predators fans have been fortunate to witness the breathtaking on-ice performance of such gifted players as 2023-2024 All-Star Filip Forsberg, franchise leader in goals, even-strength goals, game-winning goals, and hat tricks, and the indomitable goalie, Pekka Rinne, franchise leader in games played by goalie, wins, saves, save percentage (tied with Juuse Saros), goals against average, and shutouts; and

WHEREAS, the 2023-2024 Nashville Predators have turned to the original 1998 squad for leadership; the team is under the able management of general manager Barry Trotz, a

Stanley Cup-winning coach who served as the franchise's first coach and is now replacing the illustrious David Poile, and is astutely coached by original Predator Andrew Brunette, who scored the first goal in franchise history; and

WHEREAS, this year, the Predators have returned to basics, and we are certain they are rounding into excellent form as this exciting twenty-fifth anniversary season progresses; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the management, coaches, staff, and players of the Nashville Predators on the occasion of the team's twenty-fifth anniversary season, thank them for making Bridgestone Arena one of the most exciting and entertaining venues in professional sports, and extend to the team our best wishes for much continued success during its second quarter century on the ice.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we thank the Nashville Predators organization for its ongoing commitment to the Greater Nashville community as a dedicated partner in numerous charitable and philanthropic organizations and events.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.