

## Senate Resolution 758

By: Senators Tillery of the 19th and Hill of the 4th

## A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing and commending the Vidalia Heritage Academy football team for their  
2 outstanding 11–0 record; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Vidalia Heritage Academy is a fully accredited K3-12th grade private Christian  
4 school with an enrollment of 400 students. The school is located in Vidalia, Georgia, and is  
5 represented in the Georgia State Senate by Senator Blake Tillery and in the Georgia House  
6 of Representatives by Representative Greg Morris; and

7 WHEREAS, while the school is in its 23rd year of operation, athletics is relatively new to  
8 the organization. The school began its middle school football program four years ago and  
9 began competing in the Georgia Association of Private and Parochial Schools (GAPPS). In  
10 their first season, the team went undefeated, only to lose in the first round of the state  
11 playoffs. The following year, the team lost in the state semi-final round of the playoffs. In  
12 their third year, the team once again made it to the first round of the playoffs; and

13 WHEREAS, in their fourth season, the fall of 2019, this team of 20 remarkably talented and  
14 competitive young men, demonstrated the highest ideals of Christ-centered sportsmanship,  
15 worked diligently toward attaining the ultimate goal in middle school football and defeated  
16 Cherokee Christian School with a score of 46–20 to win the 2019 Georgia Association of  
17 Private and Parochial Schools State Championship, posting a perfect and impressive 11–0  
18 record; and

19 WHEREAS, their season was dedicated to Kelley Franklin, mother of one of the team's  
20 football players. She fell from the bleachers during the team's game against Griffin Christian  
21 on September 12 and was airlifted to Atlanta Medical Center. She suffered from a broken  
22 back, sustained severe spinal cord injury, and was left paralyzed from the chest down; and

23 WHEREAS, before the state championship game, Kelley was moved to the Shepherd Spinal  
24 Cord and Brain Injury facility in Atlanta. Her faith and spirit have now inspired thousands,

25 including Vidalia's football team. Moments prior to the state championship game, she  
26 FaceTimed with the team in order to challenge them to do their best every moment of the  
27 game because life can change dramatically in an instant. Recently, she was the keynote  
28 speaker at the team's Championship Ring Ceremony; and

29 WHEREAS, three members of this year's championship team were on the team during its  
30 inaugural season, playing as fifth graders: Ledger Curl, Rhett Rodgers, and Matthew Norkus;  
31 and

32 WHEREAS, eight members of this football team were also on the school's middle school  
33 baseball team, which won the GAPPS state championship in the spring of 2019; and

34 WHEREAS, the achievements, determination, perseverance, and camaraderie of these young  
35 men are a source of pride and an outstanding reflection on the players and their families,  
36 school, community, and coaches. The team is led by Head Coach and School Headmaster  
37 Jeff McCormick, Devin Frails, Seth Sitzman, and Jeffrey McCormick, Jr.

38 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body  
39 recognize and commend the Vidalia Heritage Academy football team for their outstanding  
40 11–0 record.

41 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed  
42 to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to Vidalia Heritage  
43 Academy.