

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 593

By Beck

A RESOLUTION to honor and celebrate the Nashville Predators,  
2017 NHL Western Conference champions and  
Stanley Cup finalists.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly takes great pleasure in paying tribute to the Nashville Predators of the National Hockey League (NHL), who electrified the Music City and the Volunteer State last season as they enjoyed an incredible playoff run and came within two games of winning the most coveted, and coolest, trophy in sports, the legendary Stanley Cup; and

WHEREAS, during the 2016-2017 season, the Predators made the playoffs for the third consecutive year and, while competing as the 16<sup>th</sup> and lowest seed, recorded their tenth consecutive home-playoff victory in Game 3 of the Western Conference Final; and

WHEREAS, the Smashville crew handily defeated the Chicago Blackhawks (4-0) in Round 1, made short work of the St. Louis Blues (4-1) in Round 2, and prevailed over the Anaheim Ducks (4-2) in the Western Conference Final to reach the Stanley Cup Final; and

WHEREAS, in Round 1 of the playoffs versus their nemesis, the Chicago Blackhawks, the Predators posted shutouts in Games 1 and 2 behind the brilliant work of Pekka Rinne; Kevin Fiala scored an overtime goal in Game 3 to complete the comeback win; and in Game 4, Roman Josi scored two goals to secure the team's first ever playoff series sweep; and

WHEREAS, in Round 2 of the playoffs versus their divisional rivals, the St. Louis Blues, Vern Fiddler scored the game-winning goal late in regulation as the Predators remained undefeated in the playoffs; in Game 3, with the series tied 1-1, Ryan Ellis extended his point streak to six games and Cody McLeod scored his first playoff goal as a Predator to seal a 3-1 victory; in Game 4, Ellis scored to extend his point streak to seven games, and James Neal put

away the game-winning goal; and in Game 6, leading the series 3-2, Josi, Johansen, and Calle Jarnkrok scored three unanswered goals, and the Predators advanced to the Western Conference Final for the first time in franchise history; and

WHEREAS, in Round 3, James Neal scored the game-winning goal in overtime as the Predators claimed their third straight Game 1 road victory; after losing Game 2, the Predators rebounded strongly in Game 3 behind Josi's late power-play goal to remain undefeated at home in the post-season; after losing Game 4 and Johansen for the remainder of the playoffs due to injury, Smashville responded strongly to adversity in Game 5 behind Colin Wilson's power-play tally and Pontus Aberg's first career playoff goal to claim victory; and in Game 6, the Predators captured the Clarence S. Campbell Bowl and the Western Conference Championship to advance to the first Stanley Cup Final in franchise history thanks to a hat trick from Colton Sissons and 38 saves from Pekka Rinne; and

WHEREAS, facing the multi-talented Pittsburgh Penguins in the Stanley Cup Final, the Predators lost the first two games on the road but rebounded strongly at home to win Game 3 behind five unanswered goals from Josi, Frederick Gaudreau, Neal, Craig Smith, and Mattias Ekholm and 32 saves from Pekka; in Game 4, Gaudreau tallied the game-winner while Jarnkrok, Arvidsson, and Filip Forsberg also scored to even the series at 2-2; in Game 6, despite putting up a heroic effort, the Predators fell just two victories shy of winning the Stanley Cup, as their magical playoff run was delayed until the 2018 post-season; and

WHEREAS, the Predators were fortunate to have the leadership and toughness of Captain Mike Fisher, who retired after the Stanley Cup Final, having played seventeen seasons and more than 1,000 games in the NHL, and alternate captains Roman Josi and James Neal; and

WHEREAS, throughout the regular and post seasons, the Predators enjoyed the supreme skill and hustle of the JOFA (Ryan Johansen, Filip Forsberg, and Viktor Arvidsson) line; Arvidsson tied for the team's highest goals and points totals while leading the NHL in short-handed goals; Forsberg tied for the team lead in goals; and Johansen recorded a team-high and career-high 47 assists and tied for the team's highest points total; and

WHEREAS, on the blue line, the Predators were anchored by four of the top six scoring defensemen in the 2017 Stanley Cup playoffs, Roman Josi, Ryan Ellis, All-Star Captain P.K. Subban, and Mattias Ekholm; and

WHEREAS, as always, Smashville was led in goal by the Finnish Wall, Pekka Rinne, who posted a 2.42 goals against average and a .918 save percentage while recording three shutouts during the regular season; in the playoffs, Pekka upped his game by recording a .930 save percentage, 1.96 goals against average, and two shutouts; and

WHEREAS, in the first round of the Stanley Cup playoffs versus Chicago, country music superstar Carrie Underwood sang the National Anthem, and Nashville Mayor Megan Barry waved the Golden Towel for the first home game (Game 3) on April 17, and country music artist Luke Bryan sang the anthem and waved the towel for the second home game (Game 4) on April 20; and

WHEREAS, in the second round versus St. Louis, country music band Little Big Town sang the National Anthem, and Tennessee Titans running back DeMarco Murray waved the Golden Towel for the first home game (Game 3) on April 30; country music legend and dedicated Predators fan and season-ticket holder Vince Gill and his daughters, Jennifer and Corrina, sang the anthem, and PGA golfer and Nashville native Brandt Snedeker waved the towel for the second home game on May 2 (Game 4); and country music group Lady Antebellum sang the anthem, and the injured Kevin Fiala and Franklin's popular rock band Paramore waved the towel for the third home game on May 7 (Game 6); and

WHEREAS, in the third round versus Anaheim, country music star Keith Urban sang the National Anthem, and Tennessee Titans quarterback Marcus Mariota and the Titans offensive line waved the Golden Towel for the first home game (Game 3) on May 16; pop star Kelly Clarkson sang the anthem, and rock band Kings of Leon waved the towel for the second home game on May 18 (Game 4); and country music legend Trisha Yearwood sang the anthem, and the Tennessee Titans great running back Eddie George waved the towel for the third home game on May 22 (Game 6); and

WHEREAS, in the Stanley Cup Final versus Pittsburgh, country music star Martina McBride sang the National Anthem, and the legendary Hank Williams, Jr., waved the Golden

Towel for the first home game (Game 3) on June 3; country music artist Dierks Bentley sang the anthem, and country music star Jason Aldean waved the towel for the second home game on June 5 (Game 4); and country music royalty Faith Hill sang the anthem, and country music star Tim McGraw waved the towel for the third home game on June 11 (Game 6); and

WHEREAS, the Nashville Predators' playoff roster included Kevin Fiala, Viktor Arvidsson, Miikka Salomaki, Colton Sissons, Harry Zolnierczyk, Anthony Bitetto, Brad Hunt, Yannick Weber, Calle Jarnkrok, Filip Forsberg, Matt Irwin, Cody McLeod, Craig Smith, P.A. Parenteau, Vernon Fiddler, Colin Wilson, Roman Josi, Ryan Johansen, Mattias Ekholm, Austin Watson, James Neal, P.K. Subban, Ryan Ellis, Pekka Rinne, Mike Fisher, Juuse Saros, Pontus Aberg, and Frederick Gaudreau, who scored his first three career goals in the Stanley Cup Final; and

WHEREAS, the Predators' coaching staff included Peter Laviolette – Head Coach, Phil Housley – Assistant Coach, Kevin McCarthy – Assistant Coach, Ben Vanderklok – Goaltending Coach, Lawrence Feloney – Video Coach, and Mat Myers – Video Coordinator; and

WHEREAS, Nashville's training and equipment staff included Brandon Walker – Hockey Operations Manager, David Good – Strength and Conditioning Coach, Andy Hosler – Head Athletic Trainer, DJ Amadio – Assistant Athletic Trainer, Jeff Biddle – Assistant Athletic Trainer, Pete Rogers – Head Equipment Manager, Jeff Camelio – Assistant Equipment Manager, Brad Peterson – Equipment Assistant, and Craig Baugh – Locker Room Assistant; and

WHEREAS, the Predators' management included David Poile – General Manager, Sean Henry – President and CEO, Paul Fenton – Assistant General Manager, and Brian Poile – Director of Hockey Operations; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Cigarran serves as Chairman and Governor of Predators Holdings LLC, and his fellow owners are Christopher Cigarran, Herb Fritch, Joel and Holly Dobberpuhl, DeWitt Thompson V, John Thompson, David Freeman, Warren Woo, and W. Brett Wilson; and

WHEREAS, Peter Laviolette became the twenty-fifth coach and only the second American to win 500 NHL games as he deftly guided the Predators to the Stanley Cup Final; and

WHEREAS, during his thirty-fifth season as an NHL general manager, David Poile was named General Manager of the Year; and

WHEREAS, the Nashville Predators sold out all forty-one regular season home games and all eleven home playoff games for the first time in franchise history, giving the team a total of fifty-two consecutive sell-outs last season and sixty-one consecutive home sell-outs dating back to the end of the 2015-2016 season; and

WHEREAS, the team has since enjoyed the most successful ticket sales season and highest season-ticket renewal rate to date; and

WHEREAS, the overall economic impact from a record eleven home playoff games was over \$50 million, and it is estimated that during the Nashville Predators' 2017 playoff run, nearly \$2.7 million was generated for the city through ticket, merchandise, and concessions sales taxes; and

WHEREAS, the media impact was also staggering as Game 6 of the Stanley Cup Final pulled a 28.3 rating in Nashville, the highest-rated Predators game ever in the Nashville market, and Game 3 posted a 16.6 rating in Nashville, the all-time record for an NHL game on cable; and

WHEREAS, NashvillePredators.com established a new record for monthly page views in May 2017, besting the previous monthly high by 200 percent and ranking second in the NHL for that period; an average of four million people visited NashvillePredators.com each month during the playoffs; and

WHEREAS, many business partners stepped forward in a significant manner to be the Title partner of games throughout the Predators' playoff run, including Bridgestone, Nissan, Fox Sports Tennessee, Vanderbilt, Tennessee Lottery, and Jaguar Land Rover Nashville, and new partnerships were forged with many other companies, including Frito Lay, Listerine, Premier Parking, Window World, Jackson Morgan, Corner Pub, Fitzgerald Glider Kits, Manos Wine, and Holiday World; and

WHEREAS, in total, more than seventy-five companies participated as sponsors during the playoffs alone, including Fifth Third Bank, Kroger, DEX Imaging, Farm Bureau, Hunt

Brothers Pizza, Comcast Xfinity, Mars Petcare, AvKare, Jack Daniels, and BlueCross Blue Shield of Tennessee, and many more participated in promotional activities; and

WHEREAS, the Nashville Predators Foundation, the charitable arm of the organization, collectively raised \$200,000, including auction, Smash Car, and game-night sales, during the 2016-2017 playoffs; and

WHEREAS, Nissan donated a 2017 GT-R, the specially-designed Predzilla, for auction to the highest bidder; the proceeds from the winning bid of \$113,000 were donated to the Nashville Predators Foundation; and

WHEREAS, the Game 5 auction and fundraiser during the St. Louis Blues series raised \$20,000 for the American Red Cross in support of the St. Louis flood relief efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Nashville Predators have proven beyond all doubt that hockey can live long and prosper in the South, and their Cinderella performance in the 2017 NHL playoffs has brought national attention to Smashville and its Loyal Legion of citizens; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and celebrate the Nashville Predators, defending NHL Western Conference champions, on their electrifying performance in the 2017 Stanley Cup playoffs and wish them all the best during the 2017-2018 season.

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