

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 735

By Beck

A RESOLUTION to honor Derrick Henry upon winning the 2019 NFL rushing title.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly is pleased to recognize a superb athlete who has brought NFL opponents to their knees with his punishing running style and incomparable speed in the open field; and

WHEREAS, Derrick Henry, renowned running back for the Tennessee Titans, captured the 2019 NFL rushing title (1,540 yards with an average of 5.1 yards per carry in 303 attempts) after shifting into high gear in Week 10, including a 211-yard, three touchdown performance versus Houston in the regular season finale; and

WHEREAS, in claiming this crown, King Henry became the first Titan since 2009 to lead the league in rushing and the first Heisman Trophy winner to do so since 2002; and

WHEREAS, from Week 10 through Week 15, he rushed for 188 yards and two touchdowns versus Kansas City; 159 yards and two touchdowns versus Jacksonville; 149 yards and one touchdown versus Indianapolis; 103 yards and two touchdowns versus Oakland; and 86 yards versus Houston in the teams' first tilt; and

WHEREAS, by the end of the divisional post-season game versus Baltimore, Derrick Henry had become the first player in NFL history to record 1,250 rushing yards and ten touchdowns during any eight-game stretch (1,273 rushing yards and eleven touchdowns); and

WHEREAS, he was also the NFL's 2019 co-leader in rushing touchdowns with sixteen, which accomplishment made him only the third player in franchise history to rush for at least fifteen touchdowns in a season, joining the Tyler Rose, the legendary Earl Campbell, in that rarefied atmosphere; and

WHEREAS, these remarkable accomplishments earned Derrick Henry a much-deserved selection to the Pro Bowl team; yet as the regular season ended and the Titans qualified for the playoffs, he was just getting started; and

WHEREAS, facing the six-time Super Bowl champion New England Patriots in the wild-card round, the Youngster from Yulee celebrated his 26<sup>th</sup> birthday by rushing for 182 yards, the most rushing yardage ever recorded in the playoffs against a team coached by the gentleman from New England; Derrick also rushed for a touchdown that was set up by a 22-yard reception of a screen pass from Ryan Tannehill and was otherwise instrumental in the Titans victory; and

WHEREAS, via his superb play against the Patriots, King Henry became the first NFL rushing leader to run for 100 yards in a playoff game since 1998 and the first to win a playoff game since 2007; he also became only the second Titan to rush for 100+ yards in multiple post-season games, joining the iconic Eddie George on that very short list; and

WHEREAS, despite their huge upset of the defending champion Patriots, football pundits gave the Titans little chance of repeating this feat against the number-one-AFC-seed Baltimore Ravens in the divisional round, but Derrick and his teammates, brimming with confidence, felt differently; and

WHEREAS, The Little Tractor turned in his usual brilliant performance against the Ravens by rushing for 195 yards, gaining 116 of these yards on only three carries; this multi-talented phenomenon also utilized the old-school jump pass to lob his first NFL touchdown pass to Corey Davis, as the Titans trounced the Baltimore squad and advanced to the AFC Championship Game; and

WHEREAS, as the smoke cleared after the second round of the playoffs, Derrick Henry stood tall as the first player in NFL history to post three consecutive games with at least 180 yards and at least 30 attempts and to rush for at least 175 yards in two games in the same post-season, accomplishing this remarkable feat in back-to-back contests; and

WHEREAS, his 377-yard rushing total in Tennessee's playoff wins over New England and Baltimore is the most by any player in a two-game span in a single post-season in the Super Bowl era; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Henry and his fellow Titans then faced off against the Kansas City Chiefs in the AFC Championship Game with a trip to the Super Bowl on the line; despite a valiant effort by the Boys in Blue, including a touchdown run by Derrick Henry from the wildcat formation, Kansas City prevailed, thus ending Tennessee's highly successful, storybook season and Derrick's superhuman escapades on the gridiron, at least until next season; and

WHEREAS, in the AFC Championship Game, he broke the thirty-seven-year-old record for most rushing yards during a single NFL post-season run excluding the Super Bowl with 446 yards on 83 attempts for a 5.4-yard average and two touchdowns; and

WHEREAS, a native of Yulee, Florida, Derrick Henry was named the Maxwell Football Club National High School Player of the Year and regarded as the nation's top overall athlete as a high school senior; and

WHEREAS, he finished his collegiate football career as the University of Alabama's all-time leading rusher with 3,591 yards, despite only playing three seasons; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, Derrick Henry won the Heisman Trophy and led Alabama to the College Football Playoff National Championship; and

WHEREAS, he also won the Doak Walker Award and Maxwell Award and was selected as the Walter Camp Player of the Year after rushing for a school and SEC season-record 2,219 yards; and

WHEREAS, in only his fourth NFL season, Derrick Henry has reached the acme of professional football as the league's leading rusher and co-leader in touchdowns, and his many accomplishments on the gridiron must be regarded with "Shocka" and awe by his fellow Tennesseans; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Derrick Henry upon winning the 2019 NFL rushing title, applaud his Herculean efforts on behalf of the Tennessee Titans, salute his

outstanding performances in the NFL playoffs, and extend to him our best wishes for even greater success next season.

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.