

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 920

By Carringer

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Knoxville native Todd Helton on being elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

WHEREAS, Todd Helton, a Knoxville native, a graduate of Knoxville Central High School, and a legendary two-sport athlete at the University of Tennessee, has attained the very pinnacle of Major League Baseball (MLB); and

WHEREAS, Todd Helton has recently been elected to the iconic National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York, with nearly eighty percent approval by the Baseball Writers' Association of America; and

WHEREAS, at Central High School in Knoxville, Mr. Helton was a letterman in both baseball and football; in the latter, he started all four years at quarterback and was named Class AAA Mr. Football in 1991; and

WHEREAS, during his sophomore year of 1990, Todd Helton was instrumental in the Bobcats recording a perfect season (31-0) in baseball and winning the school's first state championship since 1973; and

WHEREAS, his high school coach, Bud Bales, credits Todd Helton with a pivotal plate appearance in the first game of the 1990 state tournament that helped secure the state championship for Central; and

WHEREAS, with runners at first base and third base, Mr. Helton smacked a line drive to left field, driving in a run to seal Central's victory; and

WHEREAS, as a senior, he posted a .655 batting average and 12 home runs, was named the Regional Baseball Player of the Year, and received All-American honors from *Baseball America*; and

WHEREAS, after high school, Todd Helton attended the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, on an athletic scholarship and played both football and baseball; he was the back-up quarterback for the Vols for his first two seasons and started during the 1994 campaign before being injured and replaced by the legendary Peyton Manning; and

WHEREAS, Todd Helton was awarded the Dick Howser Trophy as National Collegiate Baseball Player of the Year following his junior baseball season in 1995; and

WHEREAS, during his singular baseball career at Tennessee, he recorded a .370 batting average, with 38 home runs and 238 RBIs (both school records), while also pitching 193 innings, registering an Earned Run Average (ERA) of 2.24, with 172 strikeouts and 23 saves; and

WHEREAS, in 1995, Todd Helton set the Tennessee saves record with 11, while posting a 0.89 ERA; he also holds the NCAA Division I record for most consecutive scoreless innings at 47; and

WHEREAS, Todd Helton played his entire MLB career of seventeen years and 2,247 games with the Colorado Rockies of the National League, who selected him eighth overall in the 1995 MLB draft and then honored him as the first Rockies player to have his number (17) retired on August 17, 2014; and

WHEREAS, he left baseball with peerless career totals in all offensive categories, finishing with a .316 batting average, .953 OPS (On-base Plus Slugging), 2,519 hits, 369 home runs, and 1,406 runs batted in (RBIs); he also won three Gold Gloves for his defensive play as a first baseman; and

WHEREAS, a five-time All-Star, four-time Silver Slugger, and a key figure in Colorado's 2007 National League Championship, Todd Helton holds the Rockies' club records for hits, home runs, doubles, walks, runs scored, RBIs, games played, and total bases; and

WHEREAS, each season from 1999 to 2004, Todd Helton met or exceeded all of the following totals: .320 batting average, 39 doubles, 30 home runs, 107 runs scored, 96 RBIs, .577 slugging percentage, and .981 OPS; and

WHEREAS, in 2000, he won the batting title with a .372 average, led MLB with a .698 slugging percentage, 59 doubles, and 147 RBIs, and topped the National League with 216 hits; and

WHEREAS, the Associated Press, *Sporting News*, USA Baseball Alumni, and *Baseball Digest* all named Todd Helton the MLB Player of the Year for his extraordinary 2000 season; and

WHEREAS, after retiring from baseball, Mr. Helton and his family returned home to Knoxville, and they are proud residents the Volunteer State; and

WHEREAS, Todd Helton is arguably the best baseball player ever to hail from Tennessee, and he is most worthy of our approbation on this special occasion; 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 and congratulate Knoxville native Todd Helton on being elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame, salute his outstanding MLB career and his many athletic accomplishments at the University of Tennessee and Knoxville Central High School, and extend to him our best wishes for much continued success and happiness in the future.

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.