

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1004

By Carter

A RESOLUTION to honor Fui Vakapuna and welcome him to Tennessee.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly takes great pleasure in warmly welcoming a gentleman who excelled in football at both the collegiate and professional levels while also performing public service in his community; and

WHEREAS, this gentleman is Fui Vakapuna, a former collegiate fullback at Brigham Young University (BYU) and a former NFL player; and

WHEREAS, the oldest of the eight children born to Uina and Semisi Vakapuna, Fui Vakapuna is the first member from either side of his family to graduate from college; and

WHEREAS, he began playing football at the tender age of seven and eventually progressed to become a four-year letterman in football at Salt Lake City's East High School, for which he also ran hurdles; and

WHEREAS, during his high school career, Fui also played for the Highland Rugby club that won two national titles; he had the honor of playing alongside future NFL players Haloti Ngata and Stewart Bradley and earned USA National MVP honors for high school rugby as a senior; and

WHEREAS, Fui was offered a scholarship to attend BYU as a high school junior; he was redshirted at BYU for the 2002 season and played one season before departing for Carlsbad, California, to participate in a Latter Day Saints church mission; and

WHEREAS, upon returning to BYU, Fui excelled for three seasons as a hard-hitting fullback who scored 17 total touchdowns, but perhaps even more impressive are the respect and admiration he earned from his teammates and coaches for his work ethic; and

WHEREAS, as a junior, he received the Leon White Award for Unselfish Devotion, and he was honored with the Robbie Bosco Award for Determination in his senior year; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, Fui was selected in the 7th round of the NFL draft by the Cincinnati Bengals and played for two seasons with the team; and

WHEREAS, he was subsequently signed by the Indianapolis Colts and then the New York Jets before retiring from the NFL in 2012; and

WHEREAS, Fui experienced an even greater thrill than the NFL draft in 2009, when he married his beautiful wife, Leone; they now have a one-year-old daughter named Maiana; and

WHEREAS, both during and after his football career, Fui gave back to the Salt Lake community by volunteering at ScenicView Academy, a school that helps adults with disabilities learn to live independent lives; and

WHEREAS, in July 2013, Fui began a new and exciting career at his alma mater by serving as assistant to the athletic director at BYU; and

WHEREAS, on April 22, 2014, Fui Vakapuna is representing the BYU Alumni Association at a golfing event in Chattanooga; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor Fui Vakapuna upon his many accomplishments and welcome him to Chattanooga and Tennessee.

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