

HOUSE RESOLUTION 196

By Haston

A RESOLUTION to recognize Bernard Childress on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that we should honor those citizens who have performed with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm throughout their years of industry; and

WHEREAS, Bernard Childress is one such estimable person who has aptly served with distinction for thirteen years as the executive director of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA) and will be taking his much-deserved retirement on June 30, 2022; and

WHEREAS, a native of Columbia, Bernard Childress is a 1973 graduate of Columbia Central High School, where he was selected for the all-state basketball team in his junior and senior years; and

WHEREAS, he received his Bachelor of Science degree from Belmont University, where he was an all-conference basketball player for three seasons and served as captain during his senior year, and obtained his master's degree in administration and supervision at Trevecca Nazarene University; and

WHEREAS, prior to joining the TSSAA, Bernard Childress served as a teacher and coach at Columbia Central High School for six years before he was named an assistant men's basketball coach at Middle Tennessee State University; and

WHEREAS, in 1986, he returned to Columbia Central High School, where he served as the assistant principal for four years before being named principal of Whitthorne Middle School, where he remained until he joined the TSSAA; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Childress began his illustrious tenure with the TSSAA in 1995, when he was hired as an assistant executive director, becoming the first African American to serve the association in an executive capacity; he was promoted to the position of executive director in 2009; and

WHEREAS, he played an integral role in returning the TSSAA to financial stability; five years into his tenure, the TSSAA began distributing shares of football and basketball championship revenue to participating schools; and

WHEREAS, under his leadership, the TSSAA established the InSideOut Initiative, a partnership between the TSSAA, the Tennessee Titans, and the NFL Foundation to help schools build a culture of positive sportsmanship; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure, Mr. Childress has also overseen the development of a number of significant technology projects, including the launch of TSSAAsports.com and the refurbishment of TSSAA.org; and

WHEREAS, the TSSAA experienced many milestones under the directorship of Mr. Childress, including the expansion of the Board of Control and Legislative Council, the separation of public and private schools for postseason competition, the sanctioning of Girls' Wrestling and the first Dual Wrestling championship for girls in the nation, and the establishment of the "Coaching Link" rule to further discourage recruiting students from one school to another; and

WHEREAS, highly respected and admired by his peers across the nation, Bernard Childress has been an active member of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and served as a member and chair of the NFHS Coaches' Education Committee, a member of the NFHS Softball Rules Committee, the NFHS Five-year Strategic Planning Committee, and the National High School Hall of Fame Screening Committee; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Mr. Childress received the prestigious NFHS Citation Award in 2005 and was inducted into the Belmont University Athletic Hall of Fame in 1992; and

WHEREAS, Bernard Childress is grateful for the love and companionship of his wife of forty-three years, Pinkie Joyce Childress, and is the proud father of Nicole (Mario) Hambrick and Tiffany (Kennedy) Emebunor and doting grandfather of Nicholas Bernard and Olivia Hermene Hambrick; and

WHEREAS, Bernard Childress exemplifies the spirit and allegiance to family and community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable career, Bernard Childress has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of the citizens of the State of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we extend to Bernard Childress our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement and every continued success in his future endeavors.

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