

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 235

By Tracy

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate the 2008-2009 Middle Tennessee State University women's basketball team on an outstanding season.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly is pleased to specially honor and commend those successful collegiate athletic teams that, through their magnificent exploits, bring honor to Tennessee and serve as exceptional ambassadors of this State; and

WHEREAS, under the leadership of Head Coach Rick Insell, the Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) women's basketball team is one such estimable team that has achieved an extraordinary level of success during the 2008-2009 season; following their 17-1 mark in regular season conference play, the MTSU Lady Blue Raiders won the Sun Belt Conference (SBC) Tournament on March 10, 2009; and

WHEREAS, the team's resounding 74-54 victory over the University of Arkansas-Little Rock Trojans earned them not only the Sun Belt championship, but also the MTSU program's twelfth trip to the NCAA tournament; and

WHEREAS, all the Lady Blue Raiders played with the utmost determination throughout the season, displaying an indomitable will to win and a spirit of camaraderie that befit competitors of their caliber; and

WHEREAS, forward Alysha Clark earned Second Team All-American honors from CBSSports.com; she was also named SBC Player of the Year, Newcomer of the Year, First Team All-League, and the tournament's Most Outstanding Player; and

WHEREAS, the junior also distinguished herself by averaging an astounding 27.5 points per game for the season, making MTSU the only school in NCAA Division I history to have two different players lead the country in scoring in back-to-back seasons; during her team's game

against Troy University on February 11, 2009, she scored an NCAA Division I record fifty points; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Clark was named SBC Player of the Week a record six times during the 2008-2009 season; she was profiled in *Sports Illustrated's* "Faces in the Crowd" in February, the same month ESPN featured a story about her on its web site; and

WHEREAS, junior guard Chelsia Lymon and junior guard/forward Brandi Brown were named to the All-SBC Third Team, while Ms. Lymon was also honored as the SBC Defensive Player of the Year; and

WHEREAS, in addition to these team standouts, the MTSU Lady Blue Raider roster includes juniors Jackie Pickel, Dana Garrett, and Shytoria Davis; sophomores Emily Queen and Anne Marie Lanning; and freshmen Tina Stewart, Abby Andrews, and Molly McFadden; and

WHEREAS, the key to the success of the women's program at MTSU has been its excellent coaching staff; in the four years Head Coach Rick Insell has been leading the MTSU Lady Blue Raiders, the team has won three Sun Belt Championships; and

WHEREAS, the Sun Belt Tournament championship also serves as a professional landmark for Coach Insell: as of their victory over Arkansas-Little Rock, he has achieved one hundred wins as Head Coach of the Lady Blue Raiders, reaching that milestone in just 132 games, faster than any other coach in the history of the women's basketball program at the university; he was also selected as the Sun Belt Coach of the Year by his peers; and

WHEREAS, the MTSU Blue Raider coaching staff also includes Assistant Coaches Allison Clark, Khadija J. Head, and Tom Hodges; and

WHEREAS, members of the support staff include Director of Operations Eric White, Graduate Assistant Kim Dye, Strength and Conditioning Coach Matt Riley, Sports Medicine Assistant Alison Ness, Basketball Secretary Debbie Bartlett, and Managers Lana Spry, Randa Brown, Joseph Bonham, Jacob Baum, and Zach Willis; and

WHEREAS, each of the members of the MTSU's women's basketball team epitomizes all that is good in today's student-athlete; the perseverance, determination, work ethic, and talent displayed by this group of young women not only made possible a championship basketball season, but also surely bode well for the success in the future; and

WHEREAS, throughout their winning season and the conference and NCAA tournaments that followed it, this exceptional group of young athletes has been guided and supported by coaches and staff members of unrivaled quality and professionalism; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee takes great pride in the tremendous accomplishments of those athletic teams that have displayed great sportsmanship and outstanding spirit, conducting themselves in a manner appropriate to the integrity of this State; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and congratulate Coach Rick Insell, and the assistant coaches, staff, and players of the Middle Tennessee State University women's basketball team on their 2008-2009 Sun Belt Championship season and wish them all the very best in their 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.