

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 582

By Massey

A RESOLUTION to honor Peyton Manning on the occasion of his retirement from professional football.

WHEREAS, Peyton Manning, a beloved son of Tennessee and one of the greatest football players of all time, has announced his retirement from the National Football League (NFL); and

WHEREAS, a great athlete, but even better human being, Peyton Manning is revered by football fans and the general populace alike; he holds a special place in the hearts of Tennesseans from all walks of life and is truly a champion's champion; and

WHEREAS, a future member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame, Peyton Manning has distinguished himself as one of the greatest NFL quarterbacks ever during his eighteen-year career, and he has now achieved the ultimate NFL goal for the second time, as his Denver Broncos emerged victorious in Super Bowl 50; and

WHEREAS, in addition to being named league MVP for a record-setting five times and being selected to fourteen Pro Bowls and seven NFL All-Pro First Teams, Peyton Manning earned his first NFL Championship by leading the Indianapolis Colts to victory in Super Bowl XLI and was named MVP of that game; and

WHEREAS, before he became the greatest quarterback of his generation, many of us remember when Mr. Manning first matriculated to the University of Tennessee (UT) at Knoxville, where he was proud to be a Volunteer and earned a reputation as an erudite student of the game of football; and

WHEREAS, from his official recruiting visit to the University of Tennessee during a blizzard on January 25, 1994, to his final game as a Vol in the Orange Bowl on January 2, 1998, Peyton Manning created a legacy that remains unequalled; and

WHEREAS, during his brilliant collegiate career, Peyton Manning excelled to become the University of Tennessee's all-time leading passer (11,201 yards and 89 touchdowns) and set forty-two NCAA, SEC, and UT records while going 39-6 as UT's starting quarterback; and

WHEREAS, even though he had completed the requirements for his bachelor's degree as a junior, he returned for an outstanding senior season at the University of Tennessee, from which he graduated Phi Beta Kappa; he was named to the GTE All-American Team and received the prestigious Maxwell Trophy, Davey O'Brien Award, Johnny Unitas Award, and Sullivan Award; and

WHEREAS, his legacy at UT also includes a 3-0 record against Alabama, two Citrus Bowl victories, three national top ten rankings, and the 1997 SEC Championship; and

WHEREAS, on March 26, 1998, UT announced the Peyton Manning Scholarship, to be funded, in part, by corporate gifts accompanying awards won by him, and on October 30, 2005, his number 16 was retired by the Vols; and

WHEREAS, drafted by the Indianapolis Colts as the first overall pick in the 1998 NFL Draft, Mr. Manning was the field general who led the Colts to eight division titles and two AFC Championships before winning the Super Bowl in 2007; and

WHEREAS, he played for the Indianapolis Colts for fourteen seasons and is the franchise's all-time leader in career wins, passing touchdowns, pass attempts, pass completions, and passing yards; and

WHEREAS, an honored member of the NFL's 2000 All-Decade Team, Mr. Manning is the only NFL player to accumulate more than 40,000 passing yards, more than 300 passing touchdowns, and 115 wins in a single decade; and

WHEREAS, a four-time NFL passing touchdown leader (2000, 2004, 2006, and 2013) and three-time passing yards leader (2000, 2003, and 2013), Peyton Manning is also the NFL's all-time leader in career touchdown passes (539) and career passing yards (71,940); and

WHEREAS, in May 2011, he underwent neck surgery and subsequently missed the entire 2011 NFL season; released by the Colts in 2012, Mr. Manning attracted the attention of

multiple NFL franchises, but he quickly chose a new football home with the Denver Broncos;  
and

WHEREAS, he was named Comeback Player of the Year by the Associated Press in 2012, and, in 2013, he reasserted himself as the premier quarterback in the game by setting Broncos' franchise records for most passing yardage, most touchdown passes, most completions, and highest passer rating in a season (for a team once piloted by the legendary John Elway) and leading the NFL in the first and second categories; and

WHEREAS, Peyton Manning commanded the Broncos to the AFC Championship and a Super Bowl berth in that same year and was named Sportsman of the Year by *Sports Illustrated*; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, he surpassed Brett Favre's NFL record for most career touchdown passes, and, in the 2015 season, he overtook Mr. Favre as the league's all-time passing yardage leader; and

WHEREAS, despite this major accomplishment, the 2015 season was a difficult one for Mr. Manning, as he suffered a debilitating injury and missed six games, but he returned to the field guns a' blazing in the final week of the season to lead Denver to a comeback victory and the top seed in the AFC playoffs, in which they bested Pittsburgh and New England at home to advance to the Super Bowl; and

WHEREAS, on February 7, 2016, Peyton Manning and the Broncos defeated the Carolina Panthers to claim Super Bowl 50, and Mr. Manning became the oldest starting quarterback to ever win a Super Bowl and the first to win two Super Bowls with two different franchises; and

WHEREAS, the Super Bowl victory gave Mr. Manning his 200<sup>th</sup> overall win, including playoffs, and established him as the quarterback with the most wins in NFL history; and

WHEREAS, respected by players, coaches, and fans throughout the NFL for his devotion to and mastery of the game, Peyton Manning is a player truly committed to the concept of team play, rather than individual glory, as evidenced by his performance in Super Bowl 50, in which he played a complementary role as the Broncos' defense dominated the game; and

WHEREAS, through the auspices of two Super Bowl wins, three NFL career records, and a brilliant eighteen-year career at quarterback, Peyton Manning reached the apex of professional football, and his departure from the game leaves a void that will not be easily filled; and

WHEREAS, perhaps the most poignant tribute to the Sheriff as he rode off into the sunset came from Tom Brady, a fierce competitor who lost to Peyton Manning-led teams three times in the AFC championship game, but who respects and reveres his rival and said most sincerely of Peyton Manning: "You changed the game forever and made everyone around you better. It's been an honor"; and

WHEREAS, this body heartily concurs with Mr. Brady; it has indeed been an honor and a privilege to watch Peyton Manning play football; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor Peyton Manning, a beloved son of Tennessee, on the occasion of his retirement from professional football, commend him on his numerous football accomplishments as a future Hall of Fame quarterback, congratulate him on his second Super Bowl victory, and extend to him our best wishes for much continued success and happiness 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.