

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 189

BY SENATORS CARTER, BISHOP, BOUDREAUX, CORTEZ, DONAHUE, LUNEAU,
MILLS, MORRELL AND PRICE

A RESOLUTION

To express the sincere condolences of the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of legendary football coach Otis Washington.

WHEREAS, it was with deep regret and profound sorrow that the members of the Senate learned of the death of Coach Otis Washington, one of the state's most outstanding football coaches, on May 24, 2019, at the age of eighty; and

WHEREAS, Coach Washington had an extraordinary impact upon the lives of countless people; this monumental impact was nowhere more evident than during his historic tenure as football coach at St. Augustine High School where he molded the minds and characters of many young men and women, preparing them for life beyond the playing field, the court, and the classroom; and

WHEREAS, he was a passionate, innovative leader and articulate communicator who helped establish the standard for St. Augustine athletics, shaping Purple Knight football into a program that reflected his dedication to discipline, teamwork, attention to detail, scholarship, and excellence both on and off the field; and

WHEREAS, Otis Washington was a Selma, Alabama, native, born on February 12, 1939, who graduated in 1957 from R.B. Hudson High School and came to Louisiana on a football scholarship to Xavier University of Louisiana where he earned all-conference honors in football (guard, linebacker) and baseball (catcher); he was the captain on what was the final football team in 1959 before the school for a time discontinued sports; and

WHEREAS, he completed his degree at Xavier in 1961 and worked eight years as an assistant coach at St. Augustine High School before being named the head coach prior to the 1969 season; he assisted on three state championship teams in the Louisiana Interscholastic Athletic and Literacy Organization before the school became a member of the Louisiana High School Athletic Association in 1967; and

WHEREAS, "Coach Wash", as he was known by most, led St. Augustine to state championships in 1975, 1978, and 1979; in his eleven seasons at the school, he compiled a

113-17-1 (86.6% winning) record and guided the Purple Knights to eleven consecutive winning seasons and seven district titles in the ultra-competitive Catholic League; more than one hundred twenty of his players went on to play college football; and

WHEREAS, in 1975, the school won the state title with a perfect 15-0 record and the 1978 state championship game, a 13-7 victory over Jesuit, drew a crowd of 44,000 at the Superdome; and

WHEREAS, he moved on to LSU in 1980 as an offensive line coach, becoming the first black coach at the school, and in 1981, was named head coach at Southern University where he served for six seasons, posting a 35-30-1 record; and

WHEREAS, Coach Washington, who remained in Baton Rouge after his coaching days, was inducted into the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame in 2015, and the St. Augustine High School Hall of Fame in 2017; he is also a member of the Allstate Sugar Bowl Greater New Orleans Hall of Fame, inducted in 1994, and the Louisiana High School Sports Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, in 1955, Coach Washington converted to Catholicism and was a member of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Baton Rouge; and

WHEREAS, although the death of Coach Washington has left a tremendous void in the lives of his beloved wife of fifty-two plus years, the former Linda Patterson of Baton Rouge, and his family, friends, and all whose lives he touched, the memory of this treasured gentleman shall live forever in the minds and hearts of all who knew and loved him.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express its most sincere and heartfelt condolences and sorrow upon the death of Otis Washington, former head football coach at St. Augustine High School and at Southern University, as well as assistant coach at Louisiana State University, and does hereby express gratitude for the indelible mark that his enduring legacy has left upon St. Augustine High School, the state of Louisiana, and the United States of America.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Coach Washington's wife.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE