

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1330

By Massey

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Johnny Majors,
legendary football player and coach of the
Tennessee Volunteers.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Johnny Majors, one of the most beloved and renowned coaches in the history of collegiate football; and

WHEREAS, a beloved son of Tennessee, Johnny Majors not only led the University of Tennessee Volunteers to an incredible season and a number two ranking in 1956, but also returned to his alma mater in 1977 to assume the position of head coach; and

WHEREAS, born May 21, 1935, John Terrill Majors was raised in a football-oriented family whose patriarch, Shirley Majors, coached football at Huntland High School for eight years and at the University of the South (Sewanee) for twenty-one years; he was the oldest of five sons, all of whom played football; and

WHEREAS, a Lynchburg native, Johnny Majors played for the Hornets at Huntland High School in Franklin County, where he scored an amazing 565 points during his high school career; and

WHEREAS, at the University of Tennessee, Johnny Majors was a standout halfback who finished his college career with 1,622 rushing yards and fifteen touchdowns on 387 attempts, while also completing 54.1 percent of his passes for 1,135 yards and eleven touchdowns; and

WHEREAS, he earned the All-Southeastern Conference (SEC) selection for tailback and the SEC Player of the Year in 1955 and 1956, as well as All-American and Back of the Year in 1956, and he finished second in the 1956 Heisman Trophy balloting; and

WHEREAS, in 1957, Johnny Majors began his coaching career as an assistant at the University of Tennessee, and went on to serve as an assistant coach at Mississippi State University from 1960 until 1963, and at the University of Arkansas from 1964 until 1967; and

WHEREAS, Coach Majors made a name for himself as a coach who could take a struggling football program and transform it into a winning team; and

WHEREAS, Johnny Majors served as head football coach at Iowa State University from 1968 until 1972, before becoming the head coach of the University of Pittsburgh from 1973 until 1976, where he won a national championship in 1976 with a perfect 12-0 record, and where he would return and serve as head coach from 1993 until 1996; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as coach of the Tennessee Volunteers from 1977 until 1992, Coach Majors compiled a 116-62-8 record, leading the Vols to three SEC championships in 1985, 1989, and 1990, and two Sugar Bowl victories in 1986 and 1991; and

WHEREAS, Coach Johnny Majors retired from coaching in 1996 and served as the assistant athletic director and chancellor at the University of Pittsburgh until 2007; and

WHEREAS, over the course of his storied football career, Coach Majors won countless awards and accolades for his talents as a leader on and off the field; and

WHEREAS, during his twenty-nine-year coaching career, Coach Majors posted an overall record of 185-137-10; he was named Coach of the Year by United Press International and the Associated Press in 1971, and earned Coach of the Year honors from the Football Writers Association and the Walter Camp Foundation in 1973 and the American Football Coaches Association in 1976; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his outstanding talents as a football player, Johnny Majors was named to the Quarter-Century All-SEC team (1950–1974) at running back, and was inducted into the National Football Foundation and College Football Hall of Fame in 1987; in 2012, the University of Tennessee retired his number "45" college jersey; and

WHEREAS, having led sixteen teams to bowl games, with an overall bowl record of 9-7, Coach Majors was inducted into the Sun Bowl Hall of Fame in 2000 and the Peach Bowl Hall of Fame in 2005; and

WHEREAS, Coach Majors, along with his wife, Mary Lynn, and their children, John and Mary, were made charter inductees of the Tennessee Hall of Fame in recognition of his many contributions to the University of Tennessee's football program and their State; and

WHEREAS, the legend of Coach Johnny Majors also lies beyond the statistics of collegiate athletics, as he built football programs that excelled in producing winning teams by recruiting and developing quality players whose grit and tenacity matched their coach – he respected and supported them, and they, in turn, were deeply loyal to him, playing their hearts out every game; and

WHEREAS, during his lifetime, Coach Johnny Majors won the respect and admiration of his peers in the coaching ranks, the devotion of his players, and the hearts of countless Tennessee Volunteer fans across the nation; and

WHEREAS, a truly special gentleman, Johnny Majors should be remembered for his integrity, his loyalty to his family and friends, and his personal courage, which never failed him; and

WHEREAS, Johnny Majors leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, seldom do gentlemen of his stature walk among us, and it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life and legacy of the legendary Johnny Majors; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Johnny Majors, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character, his illustrious coaching career, and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Coach Majors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to

the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.