

118<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# S. RES. 527

To commend and congratulate the Harding University football team for winning the 2023 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division II national championship.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 18, 2024

Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. COTTON) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

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## RESOLUTION

To commend and congratulate the Harding University football team for winning the 2023 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division II national championship.

Whereas, on December 16, 2023, the Harding University Bisons football team (referred to in this preamble as the “Bisons”) won the 2023 National Collegiate Athletic Association (referred to in this preamble as the “NCAA”) Division II national championship;

Whereas the Bisons defeated Colorado School of Mines 38–7 at McKinney Independent School District Stadium in McKinney, Texas;

Whereas this was the first time the Bisons ever competed for an NCAA Division II national championship;

Whereas the Bisons are the first Arkansas college sports team to win an NCAA Division II football national championship, and 1 of only 6 college football programs in Arkansas to win a national championship;

Whereas the Bisons completed a perfect season, winning all 15 games played in the 2023 season;

Whereas the Bisons rushed for a season total of 6,160 yards, becoming the first team at any level of NCAA football to rush for over 6,000 yards in a single season;

Whereas Bisons player Blake Delacruz rushed for 212 yards on 27 carries, breaking the NCAA Division II championship game record for rushing yards;

Whereas Paul Simmons became the Bisons head coach in 2017, was named the 2023 National Coach of the Year by D2Football.com, and under his leadership, the team—

(1) has gained a 65–13 overall record, making Simmons Harding University’s fastest head football coach to obtain 65 career wins;

(2) won the 2021 and 2023 Great American Conference championship and has never finished lower than second in the conference;

(3) has reached the NCAA Division II playoffs 5 times, compiling an 8–4 record and reaching the national semifinals in 2017, the Super Region 3 semifinals in 2021, and winning the NCAA Division II national championship game in 2023, marking Simmons as the only active coach in the Great American Conference to have more than 1 NCAA II playoff win;

Whereas the dedication and hard work of the players, coach Paul Simmons, and his staff, as well as the enthusiastic support of alumni, fans, and the Searcy community,

where Harding University resides, were all critical to the Bisons' success; and

Whereas the Bisons' coaches, players, and support staff should all be congratulated and celebrated for their accomplishments and commitment to their school, team, and community: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2               (1) commends and congratulates the Harding  
3       University football team on winning the 2023 Na-  
4       tional Collegiate Athletic Association Division II na-  
5       tional championship and completing a perfect sea-  
6       son;

7               (2) recognizes the achievements, excellence,  
8       dedication, and teamwork of the Harding University  
9       football team; and

10              (3) respectfully requests that the Secretary of  
11       the Senate transmit an enrolled copy of this resolu-  
12       tion to—

13                      (A) the head coach of the Harding Univer-  
14       sity football team, Paul Simmons;

15                      (B) the president of Harding University,  
16       Dr. Michael D. Williams; and

17                      (C) the athletic director of Harding Uni-  
18       versity, Jeff Morgan.

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