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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 256

Offered March 8, 2004

*Commending the Virginia Union University men's basketball team.*

Patrons—Marsh, Lambert, Locke, Lucas and Miller

WHEREAS, established during Reconstruction, Virginia Union University enjoys the enviable reputation as a bulwark for higher education, academic and civic leadership, and athletic prowess; and

WHEREAS, always in the pursuit of excellence, the University, since joining the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) as a charter member, has been in the forefront of athletic achievement; and

WHEREAS, many of the University's coaches have become legends in their own time, including Henry Hucles, Thomas "Tricky Tom" Harris, Dave Robbins, and Willard Bailey; and

WHEREAS, some of its alumni athletes have achieved distinguished careers in the professional leagues or in coaching, such as National Basketball Association stars Charles Oakley, Terry Davis, and Ben Wallace, defensive player of the year for 2002; and

WHEREAS, with this legacy of excellence and well experienced with success due to an outstanding athletic program, the Virginia Union University mens basketball team ("Panthers") returned to the CIAA championship in February 2004, seeking the championship title; and

WHEREAS, the team overcame a partisan crowd, a serious size disadvantage, mediocre first-half shooting, and a halftime deficit to defeat North Carolina Central University 80-72, in the 59th CIAA Championship Tournament; and

WHEREAS, steadily increasing its second-half lead to as many as 12 points to win the game, the University captured its 18th CIAA championship title, 11 of which were won during the 26-season tenure of head coach Dave Robbins; and

WHEREAS, for more than 25 years, the Panthers have flourished under the leadership of Head Coach Robbins, the Division II coach with the second highest number of wins; and

WHEREAS, under his leadership, the Panthers hold the record for the highest field goal percentage ever in the CIAA, and during his tenure, he has helped to mold the successful careers of professional ball players, and has had 10 student-athletes named Most Valuable Player; and

WHEREAS, it is with immense pride that the citizens of the Commonwealth commend the Panthers and Coach Dave Robbins for their remarkable feat, perseverance, and constant pursuit of excellence; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Virginia Union University men's basketball team; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Head Coach Dave Robbins and the young men who comprise the mighty Panthers in honor of their outstanding performance and victory.

INTRODUCED

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