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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 776

Offered January 21, 2009

Commending the University of Richmond football team on its 2008 NCAA Division I Football National Championship.

Patrons—Howell, W.J., Hamilton, Albo, Armstrong, BaCote, Cline, Cox, Crockett-Stark, Eisenberg, Fralin, Hall, Hargrove, Janis, Johnson, Lingamfelter, Loupassi, McClellan, Morrissey, Nixon, O'Bannon, Oder, Pogge, Purkey, Saxman, Ware, O., and Ware, R.L.; Senators: Hurt, Locke, Marsh, Martin, McDougle, McEachin, Newman, Norment, Puller, Quayle, Ruff, Stosch, Stuart, and Wagner

WHEREAS, the 2008 University of Richmond Spiders won the National Collegiate Athletic Association's (NCAA) Division I Football Championship Subdivision title before thousands of fans, alumni, and spectators, soundly defeating the University of Montana Grizzlies with defensive dominance and offensive efficiency in a 24 - 7 win; and

WHEREAS, the 2008 University of Richmond Spiders won nine consecutive games, their longest winning streak since 1998; and

WHEREAS, under the leadership of first-year coach Michael London, the Spiders overcame a 4 - 3 start to finish the season with a 13 - 3 record; and

WHEREAS, on their way to clinching the NCAA national championship, the University of Richmond football team members defeated Eastern Kentucky University, Appalachian State University, the defending national champion, the University of Northern Iowa, and the University of Montana for the championship at Finley Stadium in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on December 19, 2008; and

WHEREAS, the tremendous team effort throughout the regular season and the postseason championship tournament contributed to a remarkable season; and

WHEREAS, sportscasters, football fans, and the Spiders' supporters will forever recall the 162 power-rushing yards, the sacks, the interception, three first-half touchdowns, and the Spiders' offensive and defensive domination of the field that limited the University of Montana Grizzlies to just seven points, giving the Grizzlies the distinction of scoring the fourth fewest points in the 30-year history of the NCAA Division I Football Championship Game; and

WHEREAS, the victory was especially significant for the players and the entire student body because it marks the University of Richmond's first-ever NCAA National Championship in any sport; and

WHEREAS, Head Coach Michael London, the first African American to lead his team to the NCAA Division I Football National Championship game in 30 years and the third rookie head coach to lead his team to the National Championship game, gave the University of Richmond a perfect ending to his first season as head coach at his alma mater; and

WHEREAS, Head Coach Michael London was named the 2008 National Coach of the Year by the American Football Coaches Association for the Football Championship Subdivision, a well-deserved honor after an exceptional first season as head coach of the Spiders football program; and

WHEREAS, the triumphant performance of the 2008 University of Richmond football team is a tribute to the perseverance of the players, the leadership of Head Coach Michael London and his staff, and the support of the students, faculty, alumni, and fans; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend and congratulate the University of Richmond football team on its 2008 NCAA Division I Football National Championship, and Head Coach Michael London on being named 2008 National Coach of the Year; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Head Coach Michael London as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the championship performance of the University of Richmond football team.

INTRODUCED

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