

18104219D

## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 151

Offered January 22, 2018

*Commending the 1987 Washington Redskins replacement players.*

Patrons—Miyares, Adams, D.M., Cole, Delaney, Hope, LaRock, Lindsey and Rasoul; Senators: Cosgrove, Petersen, Saslaw, Spruill and Wagner

WHEREAS, during the 1987 National Football League season, which ultimately ended with a Washington Redskins victory in Super Bowl XXII, a players' strike resulted in the cancellation of one week of games and three weeks of games played that were fielded by replacement players; and

WHEREAS, the Washington Redskins held a 1 - 1 record after the second week of play, when the National Football League Players Association began a 24-day strike; the National Football League (NFL) continued to hold games as usual, beginning with week four, but with only a small percentage of its professional players on the field; and

WHEREAS, while some NFL coaches refused to participate or prepare for the replacement games, Washington Redskins head coach Joe Gibbs made every effort to both win games and build unity among the team; the Washington Redskins were the only team in the NFL with no players crossing the picket line during the strike; and

WHEREAS, the Washington Redskins began planning for a potential strike in the summer of 1987 and kept tabs on many of the last players to be cut from other teams, allowing Washington to build a small core of players with some recent professional experience; and

WHEREAS, the other Washington Redskins replacement players came from all walks of life, from former college players to a high school teacher, and all had varying levels of experience with the game; braving ridicule from fans, media, and some professional players, the replacements bonded over their unique situation and love of football; and

WHEREAS, in the first replacement game, the Washington Redskins struggled against the St. Louis Cardinals until quarterback Ed Rubbert threw an 88-yard pass to Anthony Allen, a record for longest completion of the 1987 season; the team went on to win 28 - 21, and Anthony Allen finished the day with seven catches for 225 yards, a franchise record; and

WHEREAS, the Washington Redskins then faced their division rivals, the Super Bowl champion New York Giants, who were barely able to field a complete team during the strike, and won a decisive 38 - 12 victory; and

WHEREAS, when the strike officially ended on Thursday, October 15, 1987, a majority of professional players missed the deadline to be eligible for play the following weekend; the Washington Redskins prepared for their final replacement game, a Monday Night Football matchup with the Dallas Cowboys which would decide control of the NFC East, with a mix of professional and replacement players; and

WHEREAS, in one of the biggest upsets of NFL history, the Washington Redskins dominated the Dallas Cowboys, who fielded six of their starters, including two future Pro Football Hall of Fame inductees; after Ed Rubbert was injured, Tony Robinson came in at quarterback, going 11 of 18 for 152 yards to give the team a 20 - 17 win; and

WHEREAS, with a perfect 3 - 0 record during the replacement weeks, the Washington Redskins finished the season 11 - 4 and faced the Denver Broncos in Super Bowl XXII; Washington's Doug Williams, the first African American quarterback to start in a Super Bowl, threw four touchdown passes in less than 12 minutes in a 42 - 10 rout; and

WHEREAS, the 1987 Washington Redskins replacement players helped pave the way for the championship victory, while a small number of replacement players earned a regular spot on the team, most returned to their families and communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the 1987 Washington Redskins replacement players for their critical role in the team's Super Bowl-winning season; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the 1987 Washington Redskins replacement players as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for their determination, hard work, and incredible achievements.

INTRODUCED

HJ151