

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 719

By Ketron

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize Middle Tennessee State University head football coach Rick Stockstill.

WHEREAS, the citizens of this great State and their elected representatives are extremely proud to honor and recognize those estimable coaches in college football who guide their teams to extraordinary success on the gridiron through hard work and dedication; and

WHEREAS, Rick Stockstill is one such estimable coach who has served with distinction during his four seasons as head football coach for Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU); and

WHEREAS, led by Coach Stockstill's indelible coaching abilities, the Blue Raider football team achieved an extraordinary level of success during the 2009 season, establishing a record of ten wins and three loses; and

WHEREAS, MTSU completed their amazing season by beating the University of Southern Mississippi by the score of 42-32 in the New Orleans Bowl on December 20, 2009, capturing the school's first Division I Bowl win; and

WHEREAS, finishing the season as the first team in the history of the Sun Belt Conference (SBC) with ten wins, and as one of only twenty-one teams nationally to win ten games or more, MTSU was ranked 33rd nationally in the final ESPN/USA Today Coaches Poll, and 37th nationally in the final Associated Press Poll; and

WHEREAS, the leadership and passion for the game of head coach Rick Stockstill and his assistant coaches are without peer; Coach Stockstill's precepts of playing tenacious defense, controlling the ball on offense, and limiting mistakes were perfectly on display during the Blue Raider's memorable 2009 season; and

WHEREAS, a student-athlete himself, he was a three-year letterman at Florida State University (FSU); playing the quarterback position, he served as team captain and was recognized for his tremendous athletic prowess and hard work when he was named to the All-American honorable mention team in 1981; and

WHEREAS, after receiving his bachelor's degree from FSU in 1982, Rick Stockstill entered the coaching profession at Bethune-Cookman College in 1983; and

WHEREAS, Coach Stockstill spent several seasons on the staffs of University of Central Florida, Clemson University, East Carolina University, and University of South Carolina, working with legendary coaches, including Lou Holtz and Steve Spurrier, among others, and honing his coaching skills as an assistant coach prior to being chosen to lead the MTSU Blue Raiders football program; and

WHEREAS, after taking over the MTSU football program in 2006, Coach Stockstill's teams have featured many memorable moments, including an SBC league title, twenty SBC victories, upsets of the University of Maryland in 2008 and 2009, two bowl games in four seasons, a victory in the 2009 New Orleans Bowl, ten nationally televised appearances, and recording setting crowds at MTSU's Floyd Stadium; and

WHEREAS, during his first year as head coach, Rick Stockstill led MTSU, a team predicted to finish sixth in the SBC during the pre-season, to a 2006 SBC championship and the team's first Division I post-season bowl appearance; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Coach Stockstill has evidenced an unswerving commitment to excellence that has earned him many honors, including being named the 2006 SBC Coach of the Year, the 2006 Tennessee Writers Association Coach of the Year, the 2006 ESPN.com Coach of the Year, and the 2009 SBC Coach of the Year; and

WHEREAS, perhaps the most treasured compliment he has received comes from the many accomplishments achieved by his former football players, including numerous National Football League (NFL) athletes whose careers he helped foster; and

WHEREAS, his momentous achievements aside, Coach Stockstill is most proud of the love and support of his wife, Sara, and their children, Brent and Emily; and

WHEREAS, Coach Stockstill is one of the most respected and esteemed figures in intercollegiate football competition; his coaching skills and abilities have garnered him the admiration of football fans and purists throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, this legislative body is especially proud to pause in its deliberations to recognize this fine man and his extraordinary life and coaching accomplishments; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and recognize Middle Tennessee State University head football coach Rick Stockstill for his many accomplishments and contributions to college football, applaud him for his vaunted level of success and his dedication to excellence, and extend to him our best wishes for every continued success in all his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.