

By Representative Lawson

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House Resolution

A resolution in recognition of the Florida A&M University Rattlers men's basketball team.

WHEREAS, Florida A&M University's men's basketball team began its 1998-1999 season with an 0-10 record, losing 13 of its first 14 games for the team's second worst start in school history, and

WHEREAS, however, on March 6, 1999, the Florida A&M University men's basketball team defeated South Carolina State by the score of 64-61, thus becoming the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference Champions and earning an automatic bid to the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament, and

WHEREAS, in a truly remarkable turnaround to their season, the Rattlers, who were seeded seventh in the MEAC Tournament, beat the top three seeded teams in the tournament to win their first conference championship since 1991, thus becoming the lowest seeded team in league history to win the automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament, and

WHEREAS, in a turn of events that enhanced the team's already-acquired underdog mystique to the greatest possible degree, the No. 16-seed Rattlers were paired in the opening round of the NCAA Tournament against what many consider to be the top college team in the nation and perhaps one of the best college teams to ever play basketball, the No. 1-seed Duke Blue Devils, and

WHEREAS, the efforts of Head Coach Mickey Clayton, the Rattler assistant coaches, and the players which placed them in the 1999 NCAA Tournament has garnered considerable media attention for the Rattlers across the country, and

1 WHEREAS, reporting of the Rattlers' story yielded
2 consistent analyses of Florida A&M's success, all of which
3 centered on perseverance, commitment, and the determination to
4 never give up, and

5 WHEREAS, the 1998-1999 Florida A&M University Rattlers
6 men's basketball team has earned its rightful place in the
7 litany of memorable underdogs in the world of sports, and

8 WHEREAS, it is fitting and appropriate that the Florida
9 House of Representatives recognize the 1998-1999 Florida A&M
10 University Rattlers men's basketball team for its exceptional
11 regular season and for its invitation to the 1999 NCAA Men's
12 Basketball Tournament, NOW, THEREFORE,

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14 Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of
15 Florida:

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17 That the House of Representatives of the State of
18 Florida hereby recognizes the Florida A&M University Rattlers
19 men's basketball team and offers its congratulations to the
20 players, coaches, and staff for winning the 1999 Mid-Eastern
21 Atlantic Conference Championship and for its invitation to the
22 1999 NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament.

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution
24 be transmitted to the members of the 1998-1999 Florida A&M
25 University men's basketball team, John Cuyler, Kevin George,
26 James Harris, Travis Grant, Kendrick Green, Clayton Jenkins,
27 Brian Johnson, Jamie Johnson, Derrick Magee, Frank Oilver,
28 Monroe Pippins, Jamaal Rhodes, Rod Seay, Morris Scott, and
29 Eric Tubbs, to assistant coaches Jim Baxter and Melvin Smith,
30 and to Head Coach Mickey Clayton as a tangible token of the
31 sentiments expressed herein.