

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**  
**SESSION 2005**

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**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION DRHJR70411-LG-291 (04/26)**

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Sponsors: Representatives Womble, Parmon, McGee, Folwell (Primary Sponsors);  
and Brown.

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Referred to:

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1 A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF CLARENCE  
2 E. "BIG HOUSE" GAINES, SR., LEGENDARY BASKETBALL COACH.

3 Whereas, Clarence E. Gaines was born on May 21, 1923, in Paducah,  
4 Kentucky, to Lester and Olivia Bolen Gaines; and

5 Whereas, Clarence E. Gaines attended the Paducah public schools and  
6 graduated in 1941 as class salutatorian of Lincoln High School; and

7 Whereas, Clarence E. Gaines enrolled at Morgan State University in  
8 Baltimore, Maryland, where he was an All-American football player and a member of  
9 the basketball and track teams; and

10 Whereas, in college, Clarence E. Gaines was given the nickname "Big  
11 House" because of his height and size; and

12 Whereas, Clarence E. Gaines graduated from Morgan State University in  
13 1945, with a degree in chemistry and took a temporary position with Winston-Salem  
14 Teachers' College (now Winston-Salem State University) as an assistant coach; and

15 Whereas, in 1946, Coach Gaines was not only teaching at the university but  
16 was also serving as the head football and basketball coach; and

17 Whereas, in 1948, Coach Gaines was named the Central Intercollegiate  
18 Athletic Association (CIAA) Football Coach of the Year after leading the football team  
19 to an 8-1 season; and

20 Whereas, in 1949, Coach Gaines began coaching only basketball and serving  
21 as the university's athletic director; and

22 Whereas, despite the demands of coaching and teaching, Coach Gaines made  
23 the time to continue his own education and earned a masters degree in Physical  
24 Education from Columbia University in 1950; and

25 Whereas, in 1967, Coach Gaines achieved one of the many high points in his  
26 career when his team, led by Vernon Earl "The Pearl" Monroe, compiled a regular

1 season record of 31-1, and won the NCAA Division II basketball title, the first for a  
2 historically black university; and

3       Whereas, that same year, Coach Gaines was named the NCAA Division II  
4 Coach of the Year, the first black coach to earn the honor; and

5       Whereas, Coach Gaines had an exceptional career as a basketball coach,  
6 leading his WSSU teams to 20 or more wins 18 times and winning 11 CIAA  
7 championships; and

8       Whereas, after 47 years of devotion and commitment to the Athletic  
9 Department at Winston-Salem State University and to his students, Coach Gaines  
10 retired in 1993 with an outstanding record of 828-446, making him at the time the  
11 second winningest coach in NCAA history; and

12       Whereas, Coach Gaines was named the CIAA Basketball Coach of the Year  
13 in 1957, 1961, 1963, 1970, 1975, and 1980 and the CIAA Outstanding Tournament  
14 Coach in 1953, 1957, 1960, 1961, 1963, 1966, 1970, and 1977; and

15       Whereas, Coach Gaines' accomplishments earned him numerous awards and  
16 recognitions, including the National Association of Basketball Coaches/Metropolitan  
17 Intercollegiate Basketball Association/National Intercollegiate Tournament  
18 (NABC/MIBA/NIT) Award in 1978, Indiana Sports Foundation Lifetime Achievement  
19 Award in 1990, and Order of the Long Leaf Pine; and

20       Whereas, Coach Gaines was inducted into several Halls of Fame, including  
21 the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Helms Hall of Fame  
22 (1968), CIAA Sports Hall of Fame (1976), the North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame  
23 (1978), and the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame (1982); and

24       Whereas, some of Coach Gaines' other achievements include serving as  
25 cofounder of the Winston-Salem Youth Baseball League in 1960; CIAA President from  
26 1970 to 1974; CIAA Basketball Coaches Association President from 1972 to 1976;  
27 member of the U.S. Olympic Committee from 1973 to 1976; member of the Board of  
28 Directors of the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame from 1980 to 1990;  
29 National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) President in 1989; and founder  
30 and administrator of the Winston-Salem State University National Youth Sports  
31 Program; and

32       Whereas, Coach Gaines was deeply concerned for his fellow man and was  
33 active in a number of civic and fraternal organizations, including the St. Paul United  
34 Methodist Church, Meals on Wheels, Rotary Club of Winston-Salem, Old Hickory  
35 Council of the Boy Scouts of America, and the Omega Psi Phi and Sigma Pi Phi Boule  
36 Fraternities; and

37       Whereas, Coach Gaines published his autobiography entitled "They Call Me  
38 Big House" in 2004; and

39       Whereas, Coach Gaines died on April 18, 2005, at the age of 81; and

40       Whereas, Coach Gaines is survived by his wife of 54 years, Clara Berry  
41 Gaines; a daughter, Lisa Gaines McDonald; a son, Clarence E. Gaines Jr.; four  
42 grandchildren, Loran G. McDonald, Ryan McDonald, Olivia Rose Gaines, and Garrett  
43 Christian Gaines; and

1           Whereas, Clarence E. "Big House" Gaines, Sr. was a talented coach,  
2 dedicated teacher, and concerned citizen who deserves to be recognized for his many  
3 contributions; Now, therefore,

4 Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

5           **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly honors the life and memory of  
6 Clarence E. "Big House" Gaines, Sr. and acknowledges the impact he had on the game  
7 of basketball, his student players, and Winston-Salem State University.

8           **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly extends its deepest sympathy to the  
9 family of Clarence E. "Big House" Gaines, Sr. for the loss of a beloved family member.

10          **SECTION 3.** The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this  
11 resolution to the family of Clarence E. "Big House" Gaines, Sr.

12          **SECTION 4.** This resolution is effective upon ratification.