

109TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 497

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas Arnold “Red” Auerbach was born on September 20, 1917, in Brooklyn, New York, the son of immigrants from Minsk, Russia;

Whereas Red started playing basketball as a public school student in Brooklyn and later became a star guard for Eastern District High School, making all-scholastic second team in his senior year;

Whereas Red started his coaching career at St. Albans Prep School and Roosevelt High School in Washington, D.C., before serving in the United States Navy from 1943 to 1946;

Whereas, in 1946, Red began his professional coaching career with the Washington Capitols in the Basketball Association of America (BAA) and led the team to the 1947 and 1949 division titles, joining the Boston Celtics as coach in 1950 after the BAA merged with the National Basketball Association (NBA);

Whereas Red's record of success on the basketball court and in the Celtics' front office is unmatched;

Whereas during Red's leadership of the Boston Celtics, the team won 16 NBA championships, including 9 championships, with a record 8 in a row, during Red's tenure as coach;

Whereas when Red retired from coaching in 1966 to become general manager of the Celtics, he was the winningest coach in NBA history with 1,037 victories and had won almost two-thirds of the games he had coached over a 20-year NBA coaching career;

Whereas during his nearly 57-year tenure with the Celtics as Head Coach, General Manager, Vice Chairman of the Board, and President, Red was the architect of one of the greatest dynasties in the history of professional sports;

Whereas Red infused the Celtics organization with the values of teamwork, respect, tenacity, and loyalty, creating a culture known as "Celtic Pride" that will be forever associated with the Boston Celtics franchise;

Whereas Red's imprint on the Celtics, the NBA, and the game of basketball is permanent and visible today in innovations that Red developed, including the "sixth man" role and fast break style of play;

Whereas Red was an effective and tireless ambassador for the game of basketball, both in the United States and overseas, conducting clinics, barnstorming with the Celtics, starring in the successful television series "Red on Roundball", writing 7 books on basketball, including the influential "Basketball For The Player, The Coach, and The Fan", and participating with Celtic great and Hall of Famer Larry Bird in the instructional video, "Winning Basketball";

Whereas Red received numerous awards and honors in recognition of his extraordinary achievements, such as selection as the NBA Coach of the Year in 1965, induction into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 1969, designation as the NBA "Executive of the Year" in 1980, and selection as "The Greatest Coach in the History of the NBA" by the Professional Basketball Writers' Association of America in 1980;

Whereas Red's lighting of his cigar in the closing moments of an imminent Celtics' victory became an enduring symbol of success in Boston and around the world;

Whereas Red's legacy extends beyond the game of basketball and includes his important contributions to the advancement of a colorblind society through his decision to draft the NBA's first African-American player, Chuck Cooper, in 1950, hire the first African-American head coach in professional sports, Bill Russell, in 1966, and field the first starting lineup in the NBA consisting entirely of African-American players in 1964; and

Whereas the name “Red Auerbach” will forever be synonymous with winning, intensity, integrity, and charitable causes: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of Congress that—

3 (1) Arnold “Red” Auerbach was a basketball
4 genius who embodied the values of creativity, deter-
5 mination, versatility, and commitment to helping the
6 less fortunate;

7 (2) Red Auerbach was a leader in the effort to
8 remove racial barriers and allow merit to prevail in
9 professional sports, through his decisions to draft,
10 hire, and prominently feature African-Americans on
11 the Boston Celtics basketball team; and

12 (3) Red Auerbach’s place among the greatest
13 coaches and executives of all time is assured, his
14 contributions to the betterment of society will always
15 endure, and his life exemplifies the very best ideals
16 of the United States.

Passed the House of Representatives December 6,
2006.

Attest:

Clerk.

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To honor the memory of Arnold "Red" Auerbach.