

By: Holland

H.R. No. 35

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Words cannot adequately express the sorrow felt by
2 the family, friends, colleagues, and former players of pioneering
3 football coach Mike Leach, who passed away on December 12, 2022, at
4 the age of 61; and

5 WHEREAS, Over the course of 21 seasons as a head coach at
6 Texas Tech, Washington State, and Mississippi State Universities,
7 Mr. Leach became a beloved figure in the sport of college football,
8 known not only for his influential, high-powered offenses but also
9 for his wit, curiosity, and wide-ranging interests; and

10 WHEREAS, Born on March 9, 1961, in Susanville, California,
11 Michael Charles Leach was the son of Frank Leach and the former
12 Sandra Rich; he was raised in Cody, Wyoming, where he became an
13 Eagle Scout before going on to earn a bachelor's degree from Brigham
14 Young University, a master's degree from the United States Sports
15 Academy, and a juris doctor degree from the Pepperdine University
16 Caruso School of Law; after completing his legal studies in 1986, he
17 decided not to become a lawyer and instead embarked on a career as a
18 football coach; and

19 WHEREAS, Mr. Leach got his start at California Polytechnic
20 State University in 1987, and he later held posts at the College of
21 the Desert and in a European football league; in 1989, he was hired
22 as offensive coordinator at Iowa Wesleyan University under head
23 coach Hal Mumme; the innovative, record-setting "Air Raid" offense
24 they developed led the two to subsequent stops at Valdosta State

1 University and the University of Kentucky; Mr. Leach then joined
2 the coaching staff at the University of Oklahoma, taking over a
3 middling Sooner offense that became one of the nation's top units in
4 just one season under his direction; and

5 WHEREAS, In 1999, Mr. Leach became head coach at Texas Tech,
6 and during his 10 seasons at the helm, he guided the Red Raiders to a
7 bowl game each year and his 84 victories made him the winningest
8 football coach in the university's history; the highlight of his
9 tenure came in 2008, when the team won 11 games, and he received
10 three national Coach of the Year awards; he went on to spend eight
11 seasons as head coach at Washington State, where he compiled a 55-47
12 record and was selected the 2018 American Football Coaches
13 Association National Coach of the Year in addition to garnering two
14 Pac-12 Coach of the Year accolades; in 2020, he took the reins at
15 Mississippi State and led the Bulldogs to three bowl appearances,
16 recording an 8-4 mark in 2022; and

17 WHEREAS, Mr. Leach was passionate about education, and his
18 teams routinely set records for GPA and graduation rate; he taught a
19 collegiate course on insurgent warfare and football strategies and
20 authored two books, the bestseller *Swing Your Sword: Leading the*
21 *Charge in Football and Life* and *Geronimo: Leadership Strategies of*
22 *an American Warrior*; moreover, he was a gifted mentor, and many of
23 his assistant coaches went on to successful head-coaching careers;
24 and

25 WHEREAS, In all his endeavors, Mr. Leach enjoyed the love and
26 support of his wife, the former Sharon Smith; they became the
27 parents of four children, Janeen, Kimberly, Cody, and Kiersten, and

1 they later welcomed six grandchildren into the family; and

2 WHEREAS, A singular presence in the sport of college
3 football, Mike Leach was admired for his honesty, intellect, and
4 irreverent personality, and his myriad achievements will continue
5 to be admired for many years to come; now, therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 88th Texas
7 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of Michael Charles Leach
8 and extend sincere condolences to the members of his family: to his
9 wife, Sharon Leach; to his daughters, Janeen Clark, Kimberly Betty,
10 and Kiersten Leach; to his son, Cody Leach; to his father, Frank
11 Leach; to his sisters, Lindsey Andrus, Mary Quackenbush, and Cara
12 Williams; to his brother, Tim Leach; to his six grandchildren; and
13 to his other relatives and many friends; and, be it further

14 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
15 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
16 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Mike Leach.