

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Respected college basketball coach Donald Lee
2 Haskins passed away on September 7, 2008, at the age of 78,
3 following a notable career in which he not only attained great
4 success but also helped topple racial barriers in intercollegiate
5 athletics; and

6 WHEREAS, The head coach of The University of Texas at El Paso
7 for 38 seasons, Coach Haskins compiled 719 victories and led his
8 team to the NCAA championship in 1966; in the dramatic title game of
9 that season, he became the first coach to start five black players
10 in a championship contest, and when his Miners defeated the
11 all-white team from the University of Kentucky, it signaled a
12 turning point that ultimately led to the desegregation of college
13 basketball teams in the southern United States; and

14 WHEREAS, Born on March 14, 1930, in Enid, Oklahoma, Don
15 Haskins played basketball at Oklahoma A&M and for an Amateur
16 Athletic Union team before beginning his coaching career at
17 Benjamin High School in Texas in 1955; after two additional high
18 school jobs in the Lone Star State, he was hired as the head coach at
19 UTEP in 1961, when it was known as Texas Western College; and

20 WHEREAS, The basketball program he inherited was a humble
21 one, but Coach Haskins wasted little time in transforming the
22 Miners into a team of national stature; beginning in 1963, Texas
23 Western made regular appearances in the major postseason
24 tournaments, and in 1966, it all came together for Coach Haskins and

1 his players; Texas Western lost just one game all season on its way
2 to the national championship; the triumph of the team's African
3 American athletes was a sensation at the time, and it received a
4 resurgence of interest in 2005, when Haskins chronicled the season
5 in his best-selling book *Glory Road*, which was subsequently adapted
6 into a feature film; and

7 WHEREAS, In the decades that followed the national
8 championship season, this legendary coach continued to enjoy
9 success with the Miners, capturing numerous Western Athletic
10 Conference titles and frequently advancing to the NCAA tournament;
11 at the time of his retirement in 1999, he was tied for fourth in wins
12 among active college basketball coaches, and he has been inducted
13 into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame, the Texas
14 Sports Hall of Fame, and the Jim Thorpe Association Oklahoma Sports
15 Hall of Fame; in 2001, CBS Sportsline.com named him the greatest
16 Division I men's basketball coach of all time; and

17 WHEREAS, Coach Haskins was known for a gruff demeanor that
18 earned him his nickname, "the Bear," but he was equally famous for
19 his sense of humor, his generosity, and his willingness to chat with
20 everyone he encountered; an influential friend to numerous players
21 and fellow coaches, he was likewise admired by countless residents
22 of the city that was his longtime home, and his legacy will continue
23 to be revered in El Paso and throughout the country for decades to
24 come; now, therefore, be it

25 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas
26 Legislature hereby pay tribute to the life of Donald Lee Haskins and
27 extend deepest condolences to the members of his family: to his

H.R. No. 1545

1 wife, Mary; to his sons, Brent, David, and Steve; to his three
2 grandsons; and to his other relatives and many friends; and, be it
3 further

4 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
5 prepared for his family and that when the Texas House of
6 Representatives adjourns this day, it do so in memory of Don
7 Haskins.

Chavez
Moody

H.R. No. 1545

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 1545 was unanimously adopted by a rising vote of the House on April 30, 2009.

Chief Clerk of the House