

By: Geren

H.R. No. 117

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Residents of Fort Worth and the surrounding area may  
2 indeed take great pride in the new motion picture *12 Mighty Orphans*,  
3 which was filmed in their community and tells the story of a  
4 legendary local football team; and

5           WHEREAS, Based on a book by Dallas sportswriter Jim Dent, *12*  
6 *Mighty Orphans* is about the Mighty Mites, the hardscrabble high  
7 school football team of the Masonic Widows and Orphans Home in Fort  
8 Worth during the Great Depression era; the team was coached by World  
9 War I veteran Rusty Russell, who walked away from a better-paying  
10 job to work at the orphanage in 1927; with few resources, the Mighty  
11 Mites had to practice with two socks stuffed together instead of a  
12 football, and they traveled to games in the back of Coach Russell's  
13 smoke-belching Dodge pickup truck; and

14           WHEREAS, In spite of its hardships, the team won its first  
15 game against Mineral Wells 34 to 14, and it went on to a remarkable  
16 8-2 first season; in 1932, the Mighty Mites made it to the state  
17 championship, and they reached the state semifinals in 1934, 1938,  
18 and 1940; two players, Hardy Brown and Dewitt Coulter, later played  
19 professional football, and one of the players from the first  
20 season, Abner McCall, went on to become president of Baylor  
21 University and a Texas Supreme Court justice; and

22           WHEREAS, Released by Sony Pictures Classics, this  
23 inspirational story has been brought to the screen by director and  
24 West Texas native Ty Roberts, with a screenplay by Lane Garrison,

1 Kevin Meyer, and Mr. Roberts; it stars Dallas native Luke Wilson as  
2 Coach Russell, and it features performances by such veteran actors  
3 as Martin Sheen, Robert Duvall, Wayne Knight, and Treat Williams;  
4 the film was shot in and around Fort Worth in the fall of 2019, and  
5 it provided employment to hundreds of local residents, utilized  
6 area businesses, and featured such iconic locations as Farrington  
7 Field and the Masonic Temple, as well as Yellow Jacket Stadium in  
8 Cleburne and the Texas Pythian Home in Weatherford; and

9 WHEREAS, Joining an elite group of motion pictures to be shot  
10 in Fort Worth, *12 Mighty Orphans* places the national spotlight on  
11 the city as a filming and tourist destination, while providing an  
12 entertaining showcase for the remarkable story of the Mighty Mites;  
13 now, therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas  
15 Legislature, 2nd Called Session, hereby commemorate the release of  
16 *12 Mighty Orphans* and extend to all those associated with the film  
17 sincere best wishes for continued success; and, be it further

18 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
19 prepared for the cast and crew of *12 Mighty Orphans* as an expression  
20 of high regard by the Texas House of Representatives.