

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 2017-4626, by Representative Pettigrew

1           WHEREAS, Spencer Haywood was born on April 22, 1949, in Silver  
2 City, Mississippi and grew up in rural poverty with nine siblings;  
3 and

4           WHEREAS, As a teenager, Haywood moved from Mississippi to  
5 Chicago, and then to Detroit in order to find greater opportunity;  
6 and

7           WHEREAS, Haywood began his successful basketball career by  
8 leading Pershing High School's team to the state championship, and  
9 continued his basketball success while playing for Trinidad Junior  
10 College and the University of Detroit; and

11           WHEREAS, In the 1969-70 ABA season, Haywood was named the Rookie  
12 of the Year and most valuable player (MVP), making him the youngest  
13 recipient of the MVP award; and

14           WHEREAS, Haywood went on to compete and win a gold medal with the  
15 1968 USA Olympic basketball team; and

16           WHEREAS, In 1970, despite the NBA's then-existing rule requiring  
17 a player to be four years out of high school before joining the  
18 league, Haywood joined the Seattle SuperSonics and, with SuperSonics  
19 owner Sam Schulman, launched an antitrust lawsuit against the NBA in  
20 the case *Haywood vs. National Basketball Association* arguing that the  
21 four-year rule infringed on Haywood's right to make a living; and

22           WHEREAS, After the NBA threatened punitive actions, Spencer  
23 Haywood filed the case *Haywood vs. NBA* and it went all the way to the

1 United States Supreme Court before the NBA agreed to a settlement;  
2 and

3 WHEREAS, The settlement in *Haywood vs. NBA* resulted in the Early  
4 Entry rule, also called the Spencer Haywood Rule, which  
5 revolutionized professional basketball by pioneering a path to the  
6 professional ranks for high school graduates; and

7 WHEREAS, Haywood used his talents to support his family and to  
8 become one of the most distinguished players in the history of the  
9 Seattle SuperSonics; and

10 WHEREAS, Haywood led the Seattle SuperSonics to their first ever  
11 playoff appearance, made four NBA All-Star Teams, and won an NBA  
12 Title towards the end of his career; and

13 WHEREAS, Haywood averaged 24.9 points and 12.1 rebounds per game  
14 with the SuperSonics, and accumulated 14,592 points and 7,038  
15 rebounds over the course of his career;

16 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives  
17 honor the life and accomplishments of Spencer Haywood; and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives commend  
19 Haywood for his contributions to professional basketball, the Seattle  
20 SuperSonics, the city of Seattle, and the State of Washington.

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