

CHAPTER 131 (HJR 48)

A JOINT RESOLUTION directing the Transportation Cabinet to name KY 118 from US 421 to the Daniel Boone Parkway (the Hyden Spur) in Leslie County in honor of Tim Couch.

The memories of brisk autumn afternoons of the not too distant past are made sweeter because of this native son of Eastern Kentucky, who came out of the mountains of Appalachia to place the University of Kentucky among the pantheon of the nation's college gridiron elite, who has gone after too short a time to measure himself against the finest athletes in the world, and who, all the while, has represented his family, hometown, university, and state with aplomb and class: Tim Couch.

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth was deeply blessed when on July 31, 1977, Elbert and Janice Couch became the proud parents of a son, Timothy Scott Couch; and

WHEREAS, Tim Couch's athletic talent first garnered notice at Leslie County High School, where he was an All-State performer in both football and basketball; and

WHEREAS, Tim Couch was perhaps the finest high school football player ever produced in Kentucky, holding state and national high school career records with 872 pass completions, 12,104 passing yards, and 133 touchdown passes, and leading the Leslie County High School Eagles to a four year record of 38-13 and two trips to the Class AAA state semifinals; and

WHEREAS, Tim Couch, in his senior year of 1995, was named Kentucky's "Mr. Football", the Gatorade Circle of Champions "Kentucky Player of the Year", the USA Today "National Offensive Player of the Year", and was generally considered the best high school football player in the nation; and

WHEREAS, Tim Couch, after an intense recruiting battle that involved every major power in college football, decided to stay at home and help revive the flagging gridiron fortunes of the University of Kentucky Wildcats; and

WHEREAS, Tim Couch showed flashes of brilliance in his freshman season that were a foreshadowing of the two very special seasons to come; and

WHEREAS, Tim Couch, armed with the sophisticated "Air Raid" attack of new head coach Hal Mumme, set the college football world on fire during the 1997 season, engineering a monumental upset of Southeastern Conference power Alabama, marking the first time the Wildcats had beaten the Crimson Tide in 75 years; and

WHEREAS, because of his exploits during the 1997 season, Tim Couch was named honorable mention All-American by the Football News, second team All-SEC, and was a finalist for the Davey O'Brien Award, given to the nation's top quarterback; and

WHEREAS, Tim Couch continued his "Air Raid" on opponents in 1998, throwing for at least 300 yards in every game and leading the Wildcats to a 7-5 record and a trip to Kentucky's first New Year's Day bowl game in almost 50 years; and

WHEREAS, Tim Couch's achievements during the 1998 season earned him All-American honors from several sources, unanimous first team All-SEC honors, and a fourth-place finish in the 1998 Heisman Memorial Trophy balloting; and

WHEREAS, at the conclusion of his collegiate career, Tim Couch had practically rewritten the Kentucky and Southeastern Conference record books, holding almost every major single game, season, and career passing record; and

WHEREAS, Tim Couch, feeling that he must continue to test himself against the best, decided to forego his final year of eligibility at Kentucky and was subsequently selected by the expansion Cleveland Browns with the first overall selection of the 1999 NFL Draft; and

WHEREAS, Tim Couch has continued his pattern of preternatural athletic success in the professional ranks, being named Cleveland's starting quarterback in just his second professional game and being named the NFL's "Offensive Player of the Month" for October 1999, justifying Cleveland's decision to hitch its wagon to Tim Couch's star; and

WHEREAS, Tim Couch was voted Kentucky's "Sportsman of the Year" in a Lexington Herald-Leader statewide poll of sportswriters and broadcasters in both 1995 and 1997; and

WHEREAS, both the Lexington Herald-Leader and Sports Illustrated magazine named Tim Couch one of the fifty most significant Kentucky sports figures of the 20th century; and

WHEREAS, in addition to Tim Couch's athletic exploits, he has shown a willingness to assist in charitable and civic organizations; and has given his time to such causes as the DARE program and the Children's Miracle Network; and

WHEREAS, Tim Couch has brought honor and glory to himself, his family, his university, his state, and his hometown through his athletic feats and his service to the community;

NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

Section 1. That the Transportation Cabinet is directed to name KY 118 from US 421 to the Daniel Boone Parkway in Leslie County (the Hyden Spur) the "Tim Couch Pass".

Section 2. That the Transportation Cabinet shall immediately begin preparing the appropriate highway signs naming the "Tim Couch Pass" to facilitate their erection upon the effective date of this Resolution.

Section 3. That the Clerk of the House of Representatives is directed to transmit copies of this Resolution to Tim Couch, to the Secretary of the Transportation Cabinet, and to the District Highway Engineer in Manchester, Kentucky.

Approved March 16, 2000

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