

1 A RESOLUTION adjourning the Senate in loving memory and honor of DeSales
2 High School Soccer Coach Lee Smith.

3 WHEREAS, Lee Smith was born on January 27, 1967, in Louisville, Kentucky, the
4 son of Rulan Smith and Dottie (Dumeyer) Smith; and

5 WHEREAS, Lee Smith was a 1985 graduate of Ballard High School; and

6 WHEREAS, Lee Smith is a proud Marine who served our country with honor and
7 courage for 6 years, included a tour in the Gulf War and service in Panama and Japan;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, Lee Smith was a dedicated husband to his loving wife of 25 years,
10 Sonya Smith, and proud father to two sons, Joshua and Caleb, as well as his bonus son,
11 Chartier "CK" Irakoze, who enjoyed every moment with them, creating memories
12 through fishing, hiking, traveling, teaching, and coaching in sports and life; and

13 WHEREAS, Lee Smith was a small business owner, an avid fan of the Pittsburgh
14 Steelers, but perhaps most significantly, a youth soccer coach with a passionate love for
15 the game, who became deeply ingrained in that tight-knit community by coaching for
16 more than 15 years, including 10 years at the Mockingbird Valley Soccer Club, where he
17 coached the U-19 team, and coaching with the Louisville Soccer Alliance and the
18 YMCA; and

19 WHEREAS, Lee Smith, like most coaches, cared deeply about his players and
20 sacrificed for their benefit, as Mockingbird Valley Executive Director Corey Johnson
21 described, "He would drive multiple hours a day to pick up kids who couldn't get to
22 training. He was spending hundreds of dollars out of his own pocket to house kids at
23 tournaments and make sure they had the same opportunities everybody else had. His
24 selfless acts were something I'd never seen in my 30 years of coaching. He always saw
25 something positive in everybody. He's really irreplaceable for us."; and

26 WHEREAS, after serving as an assistant coach at DeSales High School from 2018
27 to 2020, Lee Smith was named head coach of the Colts in 2021, compiling a record of

1 27-13-4 in his two seasons at the helm; and

2 WHEREAS, Lee Smith's impact at DeSales was the same as everywhere else he
3 coached, immediate and significant. In the words of DeSales Athletic Director Don
4 Bowers, "He was more than a soccer coach at DeSales. The basketball players loved him.
5 The baseball players loved him. The football players loved him. He was here all the time.
6 I joked a lot that he was kind of like my assistant AD that I didn't have to pay."; and

7 WHEREAS, Lee Smith traversed these earthly bounds on January 24, 2022, just
8 three days shy of his 56th birthday, after tragically suffering a heart attack, leaving
9 behind his family, friends, and school and soccer communities that are devastated by the
10 sudden loss of a man who gave so much yet still had much more to give; and

11 WHEREAS, Lee Smith's passing was mourned not only by his team, but also by his
12 fellow coaches in the soccer world such as Butler High School coach Mario Carrillo, who
13 lauded Smith as a very good tactical coach, and said, "I can't imagine when we play
14 DeSales next season that he's not going to be across the field on the sideline. It's hard to
15 believe he's gone. It's just a huge loss, not just for the soccer program and the school but
16 the soccer community in general."; and

17 WHEREAS, Lee Smith was passionate, generous, and selfless, a good man who
18 lived Christian values every day and whose final selfless act was choosing to save lives
19 by donating his organs to others as his last gift to the world; and

20 WHEREAS, Lee Smith was preceded in death by his father, Rulan Smith, and
21 siblings, Rulan Smith, Jr., Keith Smith, Kevin Smith, and Kathy Smith; and

22 WHEREAS, in addition to his wife and children, Lee Smith is survived by his
23 mother, Dottie Smith; daughter-in-law, Sarah Smith; siblings Perry (Donna) Smith, Tim
24 (Tara) Smith, and Dawn (Drew) Barbeau; mother and father-in-law, Garry and Linda
25 Sturgeon; sister-in-law, Melissa (Detra) Duncan; as well as a host of nieces, nephews,
26 family, friends, and former players to cherish his memory forever; and

27 WHEREAS, the life of Lee Smith, a seemingly ordinary man who did extraordinary

1 things and touched countless lives, should be remembered, honored, and celebrated;

2 NOW, THEREFORE,

3 *Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of*
4 *Kentucky:*

5 ➔Section 1. The Senate hereby extends its most profound sympathy upon the
6 passing of Lee Smith and expresses heartfelt condolences to his family in this time of
7 loss.

8 ➔Section 2. When the Senate adjourns this day, it does so in honor and loving
9 memory of Lee Smith.

10 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the Senate is hereby directed to transmit a copy of this
11 Resolution to Senator David Yates for delivery to the family of Lee Smith.