

1 A RESOLUTION honoring the Simmons College of Kentucky Lady Falcons  
2 basketball team, 2024 National Christian College Athletic Association Division II  
3 National Champions.

4 WHEREAS, Simmons College of Kentucky was founded in 1879 in Louisville,  
5 Kentucky, by the Kentucky State Convention of Colored Baptist Churches as the  
6 "Kentucky Normal and Theological Institute"; and

7 WHEREAS, since its founding, Simmons College of Kentucky has faced a varied  
8 history, experiencing extended periods of prosperity and adversity. In 2005, Rev. Dr.  
9 Kevin W. Cosby was selected as the 13th President of Simmons College of Kentucky,  
10 sparking a rebirth and renewal of the college that continues to this day; and

11 WHEREAS, under President Cosby, Simmons College of Kentucky has moved  
12 back to their original campus, resecured accreditation, enriched athletics programs, hired  
13 former University of Louisville legend Jerry Eaves as the school's athletic director, and  
14 gained recognition by the United States Department of Education as a member of the  
15 Historically Black Colleges and Universities, the only one in Louisville; and

16 WHEREAS, on March 16, 2024, at the Athletic Center on the campus of Crown  
17 College in Saint Bonifacius, Minnesota, the Simmons College of Kentucky Lady Falcons  
18 defeated the Screaming Eagles of Toccoa Falls College by a score of 79 to 70 to capture  
19 the 2024 National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA) Division II Women's  
20 Basketball Championship; and

21 WHEREAS, the Lady Falcons executed on both sides of the ball and outscored or  
22 tied Toccoa Falls College in every quarter of play, only allowing the Screaming Eagles to  
23 lead for 24 seconds of the 40-minute game; and

24 WHEREAS, the Lady Falcons were propelled by their second half shooting,  
25 making nearly half of their total field goals and about 40 percent of their attempts from 3-  
26 point range; and

27 WHEREAS, in the title game, the Lady Falcons were led by Morgan Defoor, who

1 played the whole 40 minutes, scored 30 points, and hit 6 shots from three-point range,  
2 and Naria Reed contributed with 16 points and 5 rebounds; and

3 WHEREAS, on their path to win the title, the Simmons College Lady Falcons  
4 defeated North Central University by a score of 89 to 70 in the first round and host  
5 Crown College by 70 to 63 in the semi-finals, all over the course of a three-day weekend;  
6 and

7 WHEREAS, the 2023-24 Simmons College of Kentucky Women's Basketball team,  
8 in only the second year of their program's history, faced adversity during the regular  
9 season. In only his first season as head coach, Earl Ruffin showed prowess in refocusing  
10 and leading his team to end their season on a seven-game winning streak, including the  
11 championship win; and

12 WHEREAS, following the Simmons College Lady Falcons' championship win,  
13 Coach Earl Ruffin was named Regional Coach of the Year, Morgan Defoor was named  
14 the tournament's Most Outstanding Player and to the All-Tournament Team, and Naria  
15 Reed was also named to the All-Tournament Team; and

16 WHEREAS, this championship win by the Simmons College Lady Falcons  
17 basketball team is the first in both school and program history, following a close 72 to 64  
18 loss to Arlington Baptist University in the semi-finals of last year's 2023 NCCAA  
19 Tournament; and

20 WHEREAS, the hard work and resilience shown by the Simmons College of  
21 Kentucky Lady Falcons is a testament to the power of a team united and the ability for a  
22 cohesive group of individuals to achieve something greater than themselves, and their  
23 efforts and achievements should be publicly celebrated;

24 NOW, THEREFORE,

25 ***Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of***  
26 ***Kentucky:***

27 ➔Section 1. The members of the Senate join Senator Gerald A. Neal in

1 congratulating the Simmons College of Kentucky Lady Falcons and Coach Earl Ruffin  
2 on their 2024 National Christian College Athletic Association National Championship,  
3 applauding their many accomplishments, and wishing the players and coaches good  
4 fortune in future endeavors and seasons.

5       ➔Section 2. Section 2. The Clerk of the Senate shall transmit a copy of this  
6 Resolution to Senator Gerald A. Neal for presentation to the team.