

1 A RESOLUTION adjourning the Senate in honor and loving memory of Ulysses
2 Lee "Junior" Bridgeman.

3 WHEREAS, a native of East Chicago, Indiana, Ulysses Lee "Junior" Bridgeman
4 was a standout high school basketball player who was a member of East Chicago
5 Washington High School's undefeated 1971 Indiana high school basketball championship
6 team; and

7 WHEREAS, Junior Bridgeman attended the University of Louisville, where he was
8 a standout guard for the Cardinals men's basketball team. He was the Missouri Valley
9 Conference player of the year in 1974 and 1975, and led the Cardinals to the National
10 Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) basketball tournament's final four in 1975,
11 where they lost to UCLA in overtime by one point in one of the greatest college
12 basketball games ever played; and

13 WHEREAS, in three seasons with the Cardinals, Junior Bridgeman averaged 15.5
14 points, 7.6 rebounds, and 2.7 assists per game as the team compiled a record of 72 wins
15 against 17 losses during that time; and

16 WHEREAS, after graduation, Junior Bridgeman was selected as the eighth overall
17 pick in the 1975 NBA draft by the Los Angeles Lakers and was traded to the Milwaukee
18 Bucks, where he played for most of his career; and

19 WHEREAS, Junior Bridgeman had a long, productive professional career,
20 primarily as the sixth man for a talented Milwaukee squad that won five consecutive
21 division titles from 1980 to 1984. Over his 12 seasons, he played in 849 games, averaged
22 13.6 points per game, and his number 2 jersey was retired by the Bucks; and

23 WHEREAS, although playing in an era prior to the exorbitant million-dollar
24 salaries of today and never earning more than \$350,000 in any one season, Junior
25 Bridgeman used his business acumen to become one of the most financially successful
26 former athletes. He owned over 450 Wendy's and Chili's restaurants, was a Coca-Cola
27 bottler, owned Ebony and Jet Magazines, and in 2024, became a minority owner of his

1 former team, the Milwaukee Bucks; and

2 WHEREAS, Junior Bridgeman was an important and active member of his adopted
3 hometown of Louisville and supported causes across the Commonwealth. He served as
4 chair of the University of Louisville's Board of Trustees, and was on the board of the
5 Louisville Free Public Library, West End School, the Louisville Arena Authority, the
6 Crusade for Children Foundation, and the African American Heritage Foundation; and

7 WHEREAS, Junior Bridgeman left these earthly bonds on March 11, 2025, and his
8 sudden passing left behind a community reeling from the loss of this soft-spoken man
9 who left a giant impact; and

10 WHEREAS, it is notable that Junior Bridgeman passed away while at a fundraiser
11 for the Lincoln Heritage Council of the Boy Scouts of America, where he shared a
12 personal story of not having the financial resources to participate in scouting when he
13 was a boy and encouraged attendees not to let those barriers impact the next generation of
14 potential scouts; and

15 WHEREAS, the scores of tributes and accolades to the life and legacy of Junior
16 Bridgeman can best be summed up by this statement issued by the University of
17 Louisville: "Today we lost a legend and beloved member of the Louisville basketball
18 family, Junior Bridgeman leaves an unmatched legacy and we are forever grateful for the
19 impact he's made on our program, our university and our city. We send our deepest
20 condolences to the Bridgeman family and all who loved him."; and

21 WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that the extraordinary life and accomplishments
22 of Junior Bridgeman be publicly recognized;

23 NOW, THEREFORE,

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

26 ➔Section 1. The Senate does hereby express its most profound sympathy upon
27 the passing of Ulysses Lee "Junior" Bridgeman, recognizes his tremendous

1 accomplishments in athletics and the business world, and expresses boundless gratitude
2 for his legacy of community service in Louisville and the Commonwealth.

3 ➔Section 2. When the Senate adjourns this day, it does so in honor and loving
4 memory of Ulysses Lee "Junior" Bridgeman.

5 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this
6 Resolution to the Office of Senator Gerald Neal for presentation to the family of Ulysses
7 Lee "Junior" Bridgeman.