

CONGRATULATING NBA CHAMPION
LOS ANGELES LAKERS

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 566) congratulating the 2008–2009 National Basketball Association Champions, the Los Angeles Lakers, on an outstanding and historic season.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 566

Whereas the Los Angeles Lakers are one of the most successful and respected franchises in the history of the National Basketball Association (NBA);

Whereas prior to the 2008–2009 season, the Lakers won 14 NBA championships, with a cast of players that, over the years, have included NBA greats such as Wilt Chamberlain, Erving “Magic” Johnson, James Worthy, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Shaquille O’Neal, Michael Cooper, Elgin Baylor, A.C. Green, and other Lakers stars, whose accomplishments were captured courtside by legendary Lakers sportscaster Francis Dayle “Chick/Chicky Baby” Hearn;

Whereas in the off-season, the Lakers’ General Manager, Mitch Kupchak, with the support of the team’s owner, Jerry Buss, maintained the Lakers core of Kobe Bryant, Lamar Odom, Derek Fisher, Pau Gasol, and Trevor Ariza;

Whereas the combination of Bryant, Odom, Fisher, Gasol, and Ariza, led the 2008–2009 Lakers to a 65–17 regular season record and the number one spot in the Western Conference playoffs;

Whereas Ariza first came to fame as a member of the 2002 and 2003 California State Championship teams at Westchester High School in Los Angeles, California;

Whereas the Lakers entered the NBA playoffs with home court advantage as a result of the team’s regular season performance and defeated the Utah Jazz in 5 games;

Whereas the Lakers then faced the Houston Rockets in the Western Conference semifinals, winning in 7 games, with Pau Gasol scoring 21 points in an 89–70 victory in the deciding game;

Whereas the Lakers squared off against the high-octane Denver Nuggets, clinching the series in 6 games, thanks to the outstanding play of Pau Gasol and Kobe Bryant;

Whereas the Lakers’ matchup with the Orlando Magic in the NBA finals represented a battle between a veteran team, the Lakers, and a young Magic team, led by Dwight Howard;

Whereas the Lakers won the first 2 games of the finals in Los Angeles, including a hard-fought Game 2, during which Kobe Bryant and Pau Gasol combined for 53 points, propelling the Lakers to a 101–96 victory;

Whereas although the Lakers lost Game 3 in Orlando by a score of 108–104, NBA fans were treated to a 31-point performance by Lakers guard Kobe Bryant, who played all but 8 minutes of the game;

Whereas the Lakers were able to defeat the Magic in Game 4 despite a 25-point performance by Magic forward Hedo Turkoglu;

Whereas the Lakers won Game 5 against the Magic by a final score of 99–86, clinching a historic championship, Kobe Bryant’s first championship without Shaquille O’Neal, Head Coach Phil Jackson’s 10th title as a coach, and the Lakers organization’s 15th championship;

Whereas the Lakers recovered from a devastating loss in the 2008 NBA finals against the Boston Celtics to win the 2009 NBA

championship and achieve historic championships for Head Coach Phil Jackson, and Kobe Bryant;

Whereas the Lakers’ Kobe Bryant was presented with the Bill Russell NBA Finals Most Valuable Player Award;

Whereas in addition to the contributions of superstars Bryant, Gasol, and Odom, strong contributions by Ariza, Brown, Farmar, Ilunga-Mbenga, Bynum, Fisher, Powell, Vujacic, and Walton returned the glory that has marked much of the Los Angeles Lakers franchise history;

Whereas Lakers owner Jerry Buss, General Manager Mitch Kupchak, Head Coach Phil Jackson, and the entire roster and coaching staff have joined previous great Lakers teams in winning the NBA championship; and

Whereas the hustle, team defense, and overall unselfish play of the 2008–2009 Lakers are emblematic of the tradition that has been a hallmark of the franchise for more than 63 years, and serves as a model for coaches and players everywhere: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) the 2008–2009 National Basketball Association (NBA) World Champions, the Los Angeles Lakers, are to be congratulated for an outstanding and historic season; and

(2) the Lakers, in winning their 15th NBA World Championship, capped a remarkable, unprecedented single-season turnaround that captivated basketball fans across America and around the world.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I now yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, as chairman of the House Subcommittee on the Federal Workforce, Postal Service, and the District of Columbia and on behalf of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, I am pleased to join my colleagues, and principally Ms. WATERS from the State of California, in the consideration of H. Res. 566, which provides for the recognition of the National Basketball Association Champion Los Angeles Lakers for capturing their 15th NBA championship.

House Resolution 566 was introduced by Representative MAXINE WATERS of California on June 19, 2009, and currently has the support and cosponsorship of 50 Members of Congress, none of whom are from the city of Boston, courtesy of Chairman TOWNS. The measure has been considered and approved by the Oversight Committee and now comes to the House floor as a means of highlighting the Lakers’ successful 2008–2009 NBA season and their final victory.

Madam Speaker, the Los Angeles Lakers stand as one of sporting history’s greatest franchises. The team was founded in 1946 in Detroit and moved to Minneapolis where it adopted its name, the Lakers, after Minnesota’s State nickname, Land of 10,000 Lakes. The Lakers relocated to Los Angeles in 1960.

In the 1980s, the Lakers became one of the NBA’s most electrifying and successful teams, winning five championships with Hall of Famers Earvin “Magic” Johnson, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, James Worthy, and Coach Pat Riley. The Lakers’ dominance extended into the 21st century as they won three consecutive NBA championships from 2000 to 2002.

Thanks to this year’s impressive NBA Finals victory over the Orlando Magic, the Lakers now boast the NBA franchise record for the most wins, the highest winning percentage, and the most NBA Finals appearances. Of course, I would be remiss if I failed to mention that my own beloved Boston Celtics still hold the record for the most NBA Finals championships. You would think they would have picked someone else to do this resolution, but I am happy to congratulate a job well done.

Led by Head Coach Phil Jackson, one of the most successful coaches in NBA history, and Finals MVP Kobe Bryant, the Lakers’ road to the NBA championship was lined with its fair share of challenges. While playing in the highly competitive Western Conference, the Lakers earned the conference’s best regular season record and were dominant throughout the playoffs.

For this accomplishment, Madam Speaker, we stand to commend the Los Angeles Lakers franchise, the players, coaches and, of course, the diehard Lakers fans on a job well done. I am sure that the Lakers’ championship is an enormous source of pride for the residents of Los Angeles, the surrounding area, and the great State of California as well.

In closing, I urge the adoption of House Resolution 566.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Speaker, I sympathize with the anguish and the agony that my colleague from Massachusetts must have in reading and supporting this resolution. I can only hope that this is truly captured on film for future use.

I rise in support today, as a Utah Jazz fan, in recognizing a great accomplishment in the world of sports. What these athletes are able to do and how they do it is truly remarkable. So I rise in support of H. Res. 566 to congratulate the 2008–2009 Los Angeles Lakers in bringing home their 15th NBA championship.

For the Lakers, this was a season of redemption that ultimately ended in victory and a historic achievement. The conclusion of the 2007–2008 season saw the Lakers experiencing a humiliating 39-point blowout to the

Boston Celtics in game six of the NBA Playoffs, I will remind my colleague from Massachusetts. From that moment, the storied franchise made a commitment to redeem themselves and immediately began the long, arduous process of working their way back to championship glory. One year later, this long and difficult journey culminated with victory and established themselves as the standard against which every franchise in the NBA will be measured.

While the entire Lakers organization can be proud of this team's accomplishments, the season saw some amazing individual milestones.

Coach Phil Jackson cemented his status as one of the winningest coaches, not just in the NBA but in all of professional sports, capturing an unprecedented 11th championship ring. Truly amazing.

Kobe Bryant of the Los Angeles Lakers, who came to the season as the league's reigning MVP, coming off a summer in which he helped lead Team USA to the gold in Beijing, won his fourth NBA title and his first NBA Finals MVP.

Pau Gasol of the Lakers was selected to his second All-Star appearance, his first as a Laker, and was the first Spaniard to be on an NBA title team.

Individual accomplishments aside, there is no question that this team was just, indeed, that, a team, receiving significant contributions from a host of role players that made winning this championship possible.

Shannon Brown, acquired as a throw-in in a midseason trade, played his way into the playoff rotation and made a number of significant three-pointers in key playoff games.

Derek Fisher, one of my personal favorites, the old veteran guard who was slumping his way through the playoffs, emerged in game 4 of the NBA Finals to hit a game-tying three with 4.6 seconds remaining to push the game into overtime. He followed it up with a go-ahead 27-footer that would give the Lakers the lead and the game.

Collectively, this team all season long maintained their commitment to excellence and mental toughness. They were a reflection of the entire organization—owner, Jerry Buss; general manager, Mitch Kupchak; Hall of Fame coach, Phil Jackson—and are a model of excellence; in other words, they are truly champions.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, at this time it gives me great pleasure to yield 5 minutes to the lead sponsor of this resolution, Ms. MAXINE WATERS.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I am very appreciative of my colleague from Massachusetts and his leadership on this issue and for recognizing me to stand as a proud Los Angeleno, joined by 50 other of my colleagues to congratulate the extraordinary Los Angeles Lakers for their 2009 NBA cham-

ionship. This resolution, H. Res. 566, commemorates the Los Angeles Lakers' 15th National Basketball Association championship.

Prior to the 2008–2009 season, the Lakers won 14 National Basketball Association championships with a cast of Hall of Famers and coaches, which included NBA greats such as Jerry West, Wilt Chamberlain, Earvin "Magic" Johnson, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Shaquille O'Neal, Pat Riley, and current Head Coach Phil Jackson.

This season, Kobe Bryant, Lamar Odom, Derek Fisher, Pau Gasol, and Trevor Ariza led the 2008–2009 Lakers to a 65–17 regular season record and the number one spot in the Western Conference Playoffs. Not only did Trevor Ariza help to bring another championship to Los Angeles, he also attended Westchester High School in my district.

The Lakers entered the NBA Playoffs with home court advantage as a result of the team's regular season performance, and in the first round of the playoffs, the Lakers defeated the Utah Jazz in five games to advance to the Western Conference Semifinals.

The Lakers then faced the Houston Rockets in the Western Conference Semifinals, winning seven games, and advanced to the Western Conference Finals where they faced the Denver Nuggets. The Lakers clinched the Western Conference Finals in six games, thanks to the outstanding play by Pau Gasol and Kobe Bryant, which closed out the series.

In the NBA Finals, the Lakers matched up with the Orlando Magic, led by Dwight Howard. The Lakers won the first two games of the Finals in Los Angeles, including a hard-fought game 2, during which Kobe Bryant and Pau Gasol combined for 53 points, propelling the Lakers to a 101–96 victory. The Lakers lost game 3 in Orlando by a score of 108–104; however, Lakers guard Kobe Bryant scored 31 points and played all but 8 minutes of the game.

The Lakers followed their loss in game 3 by winning the next two games in Orlando to win the 2009 NBA championship. For his outstanding play during the NBA Finals, Lakers' guard Kobe Bryant was presented with the Bill Russell NBA Finals Most Valuable Player Award and his fourth NBA championship. Lakers Head Coach Phil Jackson won his 10th NBA championship as a head coach and his 12th NBA championship overall.

Congratulations to the Lakers players, coaches, and staff on winning the 2008–2009 NBA championship.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Speaker, I am confident the Utah Jazz will be back at some point, but for now, congratulations to the Los Angeles Lakers. I, too, will be supporting H. Res. 566. Congratulations.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I, as well, want to congratulate the Lakers and the gentledady from California. I

congratulate her on her resolution and for the victory that it represents.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 566.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

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HONORING THE LIFE OF HARRY KALAS

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 350) honoring the life and accomplishments of Harry Kalas for his invaluable contributions to the national past-time of baseball, the community, and the Nation.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 350

Whereas Harry Kalas, an iconic and beloved sports broadcaster passed away on April 13, 2009;

Whereas Harry Kalas was born on March 26, 1936, in Naperville, Illinois;

Whereas Harry Kalas is a 1959 graduate of the University of Iowa with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Speech, Radio, and Television;

Whereas immediately following graduation, Harry Kalas served in the United States Army for two years in Hawaii;

Whereas following his service, Harry Kalas began his broadcasting career with KGU Radio broadcasting games for the University of Hawaii and the Hawaii Islanders of the AAA Pacific Coast League;

Whereas Harry Kalas was a member of the original Houston Astros broadcast team in 1965;

Whereas Harry Kalas joined the Philadelphia Phillies broadcast team in 1971, calling their games for the past 38 years, including 26 years with his great friend and Hall of Famer Richie Ashburn;

Whereas Harry Kalas had diverse talents, calling University of Houston football, Southwest Conference basketball, Big Five basketball, University of Notre Dame football, and NFL games, throughout his illustrious career as well as providing voice-overs for NFL films and numerous commercials;

Whereas Harry Kalas broadcast the opening of the Astrodome, Veterans Stadium, and Citizen Bank Ballpark;

Whereas in 2002, Harry Kalas was the Ford C. Frick Award Winner, named after the former National League President and Major League Baseball Commissioner, which is annually bestowed by the National Baseball Hall of Fame to a broadcaster for "major contributions to baseball";