

**SJR19 INTRODUCED**



1 SJR19  
2 WKB4EE9-1  
3 By Senators Allen, Albritton, Barfoot, Beasley, Bell, Butler,  
4 Carnley, Chambliss, Chesteen, Coleman, Coleman-Madison,  
5 Elliott, Figures, Givhan, Gudger, Hatcher, Hovey, Jones,  
6 Kelley, Kitchens, Livingston, Melson, Orr, Price, Reed,  
7 Roberts, Sessions, Shelnutt, Singleton, Smitherman, Stewart,  
8 Stutts, Waggoner, Weaver, Williams  
9 RFD:  
10 First Read: 12-Feb-25



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4 SJR        MOURNING THE DEATH AND CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF  
5 WILLIAM RAINES BATTLE III.

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8 WHEREAS, it is with profound sorrow that we note the  
9 death of Mr. William "Bill" Raines Battle III of Birmingham,  
10 Alabama, on November 27, 2024, at the age of 82; his  
11 departure leaves a void in the lives of his loving family,  
12 many friends, and the community where he was highly  
13 regarded; and

14 WHEREAS, a native of Birmingham, Mr. Battle graduated  
15 from West End High School in 1959 before enrolling at The  
16 University of Alabama; as one of Coach Bear Bryant's  
17 scholarship athletes, Bill helped lead the team to a  
18 national championship in 1961; and

19 WHEREAS, after graduating in 1963, Mr. Battle began a  
20 career in coaching, serving as a graduate assistant at the  
21 University of Oklahoma and as an assistant coach at West  
22 Point, before becoming head football coach at the University  
23 of Tennessee at the age of 28, which made him the youngest  
24 college football coach in the country at that time; and

25 WHEREAS, following a remarkable coaching career which  
26 included a 59-22-2 record and four bowl game wins, Mr.  
27 Battle left coaching and moved to Selma, Alabama; while  
28 there, he began working for his former little league



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29 football coach, Larry Striplin, and served as President/CEO  
30 for Disco Aluminum and formed Golden Eagle Enterprises  
31 (GEE); and

32 WHEREAS, Mr. Battle agreed to represent Coach Bryant  
33 as a licensing client, as Bryant became the most successful  
34 coach in college football; the working relationship led to  
35 The University of Alabama being Bill's first university  
36 licensing client; GEE would ultimately become the Collegiate  
37 Licensing Company (CLC), formed in 1981; Bill moved the CLC  
38 headquarters to Atlanta, Georgia, where the company became  
39 the groundbreaking sports marketing agency that  
40 revolutionized the collegiate licensing industry; and

41 WHEREAS, after a brief retirement, Coach Battle  
42 returned to the sports world in 2013 when he became the  
43 Director of Athletics at The University of Alabama; he  
44 oversaw a remarkable run of success, including three  
45 national championships; and

46 WHEREAS, despite all of his sports and business  
47 success, Mr. Battle will be remembered most by his family as  
48 an amazing husband, father, and beloved "Crawdaddy"; he was  
49 a loving patriarch who was always there to provide guidance,  
50 support, and a warm hug; Bill was an avid fly fisherman and  
51 turkey hunter, taking many trips to Alaska and his favorite  
52 spots in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and Ellijay, Georgia; and

53 WHEREAS, Mr. Battle was preceded in death by his  
54 parents, William Raines Battle, Jr. and Kathleen Scruggs  
55 Battle; he will be remembered by his wife, Mary; children,  
56 Pat Battle (Alice Ann), Mike Battle, Shannon Battle, and

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57      Kayla Smeraglia (Frankie); grandchildren, Will  
58      Battle (Danielle), Mary Raines Battle, Mary Catherine  
59      Trumbower (Taylor), Annie Battle, Denver Pingley, Mary Scott  
60      Pingley, Hudson Smeraglia, and Reynolds Smeraglia;  
61      great-grandchildren, Allie Battle, Buck Trumbower, and Paul  
62      Battle; sister, Jean LeMerle Battle; and a host of family,  
63      friends, and loved ones; and

64            WHEREAS, although his presence will be greatly  
65      missed, the memory of Bill Battle will be cherished in the  
66      hearts of all who knew and loved him; now therefore,

67            BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH  
68      HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the death of Mr. William  
69      "Bill" Raines Battle III is recorded with deep sadness, and  
70      this resolution is offered to his family in tribute to his  
71      life and with heartfelt sympathy to his loved ones whose  
72      grief is shared by many.

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