

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, Shelnuttt, 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.