

Today we should rise and honor the memory of both the Texas Western College team and their coach, Don Haskins, who led them to a National Championship, and in doing so advanced the cause of civil rights and decreased segregation in athletics.

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 668 to give recognition where recognition is long overdue. With this resolution, Congress applauds the groundbreaking significance of the 1966 NCAA Division I men's basketball championship in which Texas Western upset the heavily favored University of Kentucky. That year, the Miners had an all-Black starting line-up, a first in a national championship competition that helped change the perception of Black athletes.

Texas Western Coach Don Haskins and his players may not have set out to change history, but they did. The 1966 championship game helped pave the way for integration of athletics, opening sports to the civil rights movement, often being dubbed, the Brown v. Board of Education of sports. The next season, the Southwest Conference was integrated, and in 1967–68, Vanderbilt broke the Southeast Conference color barrier.

Unfortunately, it has taken decades before Coach Haskins and his players' achievements have been recognized. In 1966 there were no trips to the White House or appearances on the Ed Sullivan show, both customary for national champions. The team did not even receive national championship rings until their 20-year reunion in 1986.

It is time to recognize the profound contribution to the civil rights movement that this game spurred, and to recognize the 1966 NCAA Division I men's basketball champions, the Texas Western Miners. I urge my colleagues in joining me in supporting this bipartisan legislation.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 1966 Texas Western Men's Basketball Team. Their NCAA championship victory over Kentucky forever changed college athletics.

Even though it had been over a decade since Brown v. Board of Education, many colleges had lagged behind on implementing integration into their athletics programs. In 1966, college basketball players were often recruited on the basis of their skin color rather than playing ability. Texas Western coach Bob Haskins did not succumb to pressures to start his White players. He simply played his best players regardless of skin color.

This resulted in the first time an all-Black starting line-up participated in a major athletic championship contest. The impact was felt throughout the country when little-known Texas Western upset legendary all-White Kentucky.

Perhaps most important in this victory was the stereotypes and misconceptions that were broken down. For many, the assumption remained that Black players would not be skilled or smart enough to successfully compete against White players. Bob Haskins and Texas Western proved on a national stage that Black players can win and are as smart and talented as their White counterparts.

The 1966 Texas Western men's basketball team opened the doors for schools that had stalled in implementing integration policies into their athletics programs; breaking down barriers and forever changing college athletics.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Congressman SILVESTRE REYES for offering House Resolution 668, a resolution which celebrates this year's 40th anniversary of Texas Western's 1966 NCAA Basketball Championship.

The year of 1966 marked a number of "firsts" by African Americans. The Honorable Robert C. Weaver became the first African American Cabinet member with his appointment as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Edward Brooke became the first popularly elected African American to the United States Senate, and it also marked the first time a collegiate basketball team, the Texas Western Miners, sporting an all African American line-up won the NCAA Men's Division I Basketball Championship.

What made this victory important, and what we are commemorating here today, is not the fact that a team starting all African American student athletes beat a team of all White student athletes. We commemorate rather, the closing of one more chapter of segregation and bigotry to a new chapter where we judge an individual on the content of their character and qualifications and not on the color of their skin.

The Texas Western Miners, in their victory over the University of Kentucky Wildcats, opened up numerous opportunities for student athletes of all races and creeds to attend college, participate in sports, and become eligible for athletic scholarships. The fact that the impact that this victory did so much to change the perception of African-American athletes and to speed the desegregation of intercollegiate sports, has led many people to label this historic event as the Brown v. Board of Education of athletics.

Finally, any tribute to the Minors would be incomplete without acknowledging their coach, Don Haskins. Coach Haskins is to be commended for his continued commitment to build on the foundation of integration that he inherited at Texas Western—the first college in a Southern state to integrate its athletic teams—and for his courage in facing collegiate basketball's racial issues directly.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize the 40th anniversary of Texas Western's 1966 NCAA Basketball Championship. The title game had a profound impact on the state of racial integration in sports and civil rights in America.

On March 16, 1966, Coach Don Haskins led the first ever all-Black starting lineup to play in a major championship contest in a victory over the heavily-favored Kentucky Wildcats.

Coach Haskins played high school basketball in Enid, Oklahoma, and in college at Oklahoma A&M (now Oklahoma State). He then became a successful high school basketball coach in Texas. Haskins was a coach at Dumas High School before becoming the head of the men's team at Texas Western College, now the University of Texas at El Paso, in 1961.

Haskins coached the Miners to 33 winning seasons over the course of his career with the Miners. He won seven Western Athletic Conference championships, four Western Athletic Conference tournament titles, and made 21 post-season appearances. He established a proud winning tradition in the community of El Paso that still exists today. Coach Haskins was voted in to the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 1997.

The Texas Western Miners' victory was a watershed moment for diversity in college athletics. It helped expand the civil rights movement into the realm of sports. On January 13, 2006, Walt Disney Pictures released *Glory Road*, which tells the story of the historic 1966 season and pays tribute to the dedication and bravery of Coach Haskins.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I also yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CONAWAY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 668, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. KELLER. Mr. 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 question will be postponed.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

LOUIS BRAILLE BICENTENNIAL— BRAILLE LITERACY COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2872) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of Louis Braille, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2872

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Louis Braille Bicentennial—Braille Literacy Commemorative Coin Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds as follows:

(1) Louis Braille, who invented the Braille method for reading and writing by the blind that has allowed millions of blind people to be literate participants in their societies, was born in Coupvray, a small village near Paris, on January 4, 1809.

(2) Braille lost his sight at the age of three after injuring himself with an awl in the shop of his father Rene, a maker of harnesses and other objects of leather.

(3) A youth who was both intelligent and creative and was blessed with dedicated parents, a thoughtful local priest and an energetic local schoolteacher, Braille adapted to the situation and attended local school with other youths of his age, an unheard-of practice for a blind child of the period.

(4) At the age of 10, when his schooling otherwise would have stopped, Braille—with the aid of the priest and schoolteacher—was