

CONGRATULATIONS TO AVERY JOHNSON; NBA'S COACH OF THE YEAR FOR 2005-2006

**HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 27, 2006*

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join the chorus of Dallas citizens and Mavericks fans across the globe in saluting Dallas Mavericks head coach Avery Johnson on his selection as the National Basketball Association's Coach of the Year for the 2005-06 season. In only his first full season as head coach of the Mavericks, Avery Johnson is the first coach in the storied history of the organization to receive the National Basketball Association's most distinguished honor for coaches. This season Coach Johnson led the club to an outstanding 60-win season, one of the best in franchise history.

In March of last year Avery Johnson assumed the duties of head coach of the Dallas Mavericks after former head coach Don Nelson decided to step down. Prior to the season, Johnson announced his retirement as a player

in October of 2004 to assume full-time duties as an assistant coach. Prior to his coaching debut, Avery compiled a stellar basketball resume at both the collegiate and professional levels.

Avery was a college standout at Southern University where he led the NCAA in assists as a junior and senior. He was named the Southwestern Athletic Conference Player of the Year and the MVP of the conference tournament both seasons as well. He still holds several NCAA Division I records including the most assists in a single game, the highest single season assists average and the highest career assists average.

At 5-11 and 180 pounds Avery went undrafted out of college, yet he did not let this deter him from his ultimate goal of playing in the NBA. He first played for the United States Basketball League with the Palm Beach Stingrays in 1988. His tenacious play and rock solid leadership led to his signing as a free agent with the Seattle SuperSonics later that year.

In his 16-year career with the NBA, Johnson played 1,054 games and averaged 8.4 points, 5.5 assists and 1.7 rebounds in 25.3 minutes per game. Avery also played in 90 playoff games and started 73 of those contests. He has playoff averages of 10.5 points, 6.2 as-

sists and 1.13 steals in 31.2 minutes per game. In 1999, he was a member of the NBA's Championship team.

Johnson became the 75th player in NBA history to play 1,000 career games in March of 2003 and joined Calvin Murphy as the only other player under 6-feet in height to reach that milestone. He also reached the 5,000 career assists plateau in February of 2000 against the Minnesota Timberwolves.

From 1990-92, he played with San Antonio, Denver, Houston and back to San Antonio. In eight of the next nine seasons (1992-2001), he was a member of the San Antonio Spurs. He spent one year during that time in Golden State (1993-94). He spent his last few seasons with the Denver Nuggets, Golden State, and signed with Dallas as a player/coach prior to the 2004-05 season prior to entering coaching.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to congratulate Head Coach Avery Johnson on his selection as the National Basketball Association's Coach of the Year. He is a proven leader and I am certain he will continue to lead the Mavericks organization to new heights. GO MAV-ERICKS!