

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2019-1086

TITLE: Resolution Honoring “Mr. Two Bits”

AUTHOR(S): Senator Grant Loy, Senator Tyler Kendrick, Senator Gabi Zlatanoff

SPONSOR(S): Senate President Libby Shaw, Senate President Pro-Tempore Emily Dunson, Budget and Appropriations Chairman Cooper Brown, Allocations Chairwoman Sam Girschick, Senator Audrey Wikan, Senator Amol Dhaliwal, Senator Kevin Trejos, Senator Wynton White, Senator Matthew Diaz, Trevor Pope

WHEREAS, George E. Edmondson Jr., also known as “Mr. Two Bits,” passed away peacefully at the age of 97 on July 2, 2019 [1]; and,

WHEREAS, Edmondson inspired a generation of Florida Gators football fan participation and revolutionized the culture of the Florida Gators football program; and,

WHEREAS, Edmondson was named as an Honorary Letterwinner in the University of Florida Athletic Hall of Fame, as he was identified as having significantly contributed to the success of Florida Gators football team [2]; and,

WHEREAS, Edmondson led Florida Gator football fans in their traditional “Mr. Two Bits” cheer for 60 years, beginning in 1949 [3]; and,

WHEREAS, when he began, the Florida Gators football team were bottom dwellers in the SEC [4]; and,

WHEREAS, in 1949, Edmondson was in the stands when fans began to boo as the Gators took the field for their season opener against The Citadel [5]; and,

WHEREAS, instead of jeering along with the crowd, he would gather fans around him to cheer on the football team whenever the players made an error [5]; and,

WHEREAS, the notorious rally cry proclaims “Two bits! Four bits! Six bits! A dollar! All for the Gators, stand up and holler!” [1]; and,

WHEREAS, his cheer routine took hold of fans who began to recognize him as “Mr. Two Bits,” the vibrant fan who always wore a yellow dress shirt, an orange-and-blue striped tie, khaki pants, and brown-and-beige saddle shoes [2]; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Two Bits cheered with a whistle around his neck and a rolled-up “2-Bits” sign in his back pocket from both the field and from section-to-section during stoppages in play, he would blow the whistle while holding up his sign and lead fans in the recognizable cheer [1]; and,

WHEREAS, following Edmondson's retirement at the end of the 2008 football season, Florida's mascots "Albert" and "Alberta" continued the pregame "Two Bits" tradition until 2013, when the University of Florida began inviting celebrities, students, and Gator-greats alike to perform the iconic role [6]; and,

WHEREAS, Gator-greats have dressed up like Edmondson and mimicked his cheer before games; including Steve Spurrier, Dara Torres, Cris Collinsworth, Danny Wuerffel, and numerous other Gator legends [1]; and,

WHEREAS, the inaugural 2019 "Stand Up & Holler: Gator Nation Giving Day's" campaign was named in recognition of the beloved cheer [8]; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida has emblazoned Edmonson's classic orange-and-blue striped neck-tie on t-shirts and have placed replicas as large as 30 feet strategically throughout campus [8]; then,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate honors the contributions of George E. Edmondson Jr. in regards to enriching the culture of the University of Florida.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate remembers George E. Edmondson Jr.'s legacy through a celebration of his life in Tampa this August 2019.

THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate encourages the University of Florida Athletic Department to honor Edmondson's legacy with a brief moment of silence at the first Florida Gators football home game of the 2019 football season.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution will be sent to President W. Kent Fuchs, Provost Joseph Glover, Interim Vice President of Student Affairs Win Phillips, Assistant Vice President of Student Engagement Nancy Chrystal-Green, Head Ball Coach Steve Spurrier, Head Football Coach Dan Mullen, Athletic Director Scott Stricklin, and George E. Edmondson Jr.'s family.

[1] https://www.espn.com/college-football/story/_/id/27121155/florida-famous-cheerleader-mr-two-bits-dies

[2] <http://www.onlygators.com/07/04/2019/florida-gators-icon-george-edmondson-better-known-as-mr-two-bits-dies-at-97/>

[3] <https://www.alligatorarmy.com/2019/7/4/20682360/george-edmondson-dies-mr-two-bits-cheer-florida-gators>

[4] <https://www.sports-reference.com/cbb/conferences/sec/1950.html>

[5] <https://www.tampabay.com/sports/florida-gators/2019/07/04/from-the-archives-how-mr-two-bits-started-the-florida-gators-tradition/>

[6] <https://floridagators.com/news/2019/7/4/football-george-edmondson-iconic-mr-two-bits-passes-at-97.aspx>

[7] <https://giftplanning.uff.ufl.edu/meet-our-donors/george-edmondson-jr>

[8] <https://www.uff.ufl.edu/your-impact/giving-day-gators-roared/>