

By: Representatives Duffield, *Duke*

HOUSE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

TO REMEMBER BOXER TOMMY MORRISON OF GRAVETTE FOR HIS
LEGENDARY BOXING SKILLS THAT BROUGHT RENOWN TO HIM
AND TO THE STATE OF ARKANSAS.

Subtitle

TO REMEMBER BOXER TOMMY MORRISON OF
GRAVETTE FOR HIS LEGENDARY BOXING SKILLS
THAT BROUGHT RENOWN TO HIM AND TO THE
STATE OF ARKANSAS.

WHEREAS, Tommy "The Duke" Morrison, formerly of Omaha, Nebraska, passed away on September 1, 2013, at the age of forty-four (44); and

WHEREAS, Tommy "The Duke" Morrison was born in Gravette, Arkansas, on January 2, 1969, to a mother, Diana, of Native American ancestry and a father, Tim, of Scottish ancestry; and

WHEREAS, Tommy "The Duke" Morrison spent his teenage years in Oklahoma, and his father encouraged him to take up boxing during the 1970s, a sport in which Morrison found immediate success; and

WHEREAS, Tommy "The Duke" Morrison acquired his nickname, "The Duke", based on a claim that he was a distant relative of famed actor Marion "John Wayne" Morrison, who was also nicknamed "The Duke"; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from high school, Tommy "The Duke" Morrison received a football scholarship to Emporia State University, and in the same



year won the Regional Heavy Weight Title, Kansas City Golden Gloves, and advanced to the National Golden Gloves in Omaha, Nebraska, where he won the majority of his fights; and

WHEREAS, also in that same year, Tommy "The Duke" Morrison took part in the Western Olympic trials, qualified for the nationals, and garnered the tournament's Outstanding Fighter award; and

WHEREAS, Tommy "The Duke" Morrison had accumulated numerous wins as a boxer when he was spotted in 1989 by actor Sylvester Stallone, who, after watching one of Morrison's bouts, arranged a script reading and cast Morrison in the film "Rocky V" as Tommy "The Machine" Gunn, a young and talented protege of retired main character Rocky Balboa; and

WHEREAS, among his many victories, Tommy "The Duke" Morrison became the new World Boxing Organization heavyweight champion in 1993 by defeating heavyweight boxing legend George Foreman; and

WHEREAS, Tommy "The Duke" Morrison's professional boxing record encompassed fifty-two (52) fights, of which he won forty-eight and lost three (48-3), and his amateur boxing record encompassed two hundred twenty-two fights, of which he won two hundred two and lost twenty (202-20); and

WHEREAS, the World Boxing Organization said Tommy "The Duke" Morrison would be remembered best for his dangerous punching power and especially his left hook, and two-time heavyweight champion Pinklon Thomas ranked Morrison ahead of Mike Tyson as the hardest puncher he had ever faced,

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

THAT the House of Representatives remember boxer Tommy Morrison of Gravette for his legendary boxing skills that brought renown to him and to the State of Arkansas.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT upon adoption, a copy of this resolution be presented to Tommy "The Duke" Morrison's son, Kenzie Morrison, by the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives.

/s/Duffield