

1 SJR50
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3 By Senator Allen
4 RFD:
5 First Read: 03-MAR-21

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7
8 MOURNING THE DEATH OF DR. DONALD J. SALLS.
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10 WHEREAS, it is with profound sorrow that we note the
11 death of Dr. Donald J. Salls of Fairhope, Alabama, on January
12 2, 2021, at the age of 101 years; he was the oldest living
13 University of Alabama football letterman; his passing leaves a
14 void in the lives of his loving family, many friends, and the
15 entire community, where he was highly regarded; and

16 WHEREAS, Dr. Salls was a native of White Plains, New
17 York; he was awarded a scholarship to The University of
18 Alabama in 1938; he played his first game as a sophomore in
19 1940 and quickly returned an interception for a 76-yard
20 touchdown; he lettered at fullback and linebacker in 1941 and
21 1942, scoring eight touchdowns, including the only touchdown
22 in a 9-2 victory over Tennessee in 1942; he helped the Crimson
23 Tide to a 29-21 win in the January 1, 1942, Cotton Bowl and a
24 37-21 victory over Boston College in the January 1, 1943,
25 Orange Bowl; and

26 WHEREAS, following the Orange Bowl game, he joined
27 the U.S. Army and bravely served his country during World War

1 II; he was wounded in France on September 19, 1944; he was
2 awarded the Purple Heart, Bronze Star with oak leaf cluster,
3 the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with three
4 battle stars, as well as numerous other medals; he was
5 promoted to captain and was honorably discharged in 1945; and

6 WHEREAS, Dr. Salls returned to The University of
7 Alabama in 1945 and earned his Master's degree in 1946; he was
8 hired as head football coach at Jacksonville State University,
9 where he coached for 19 years and posted a 95-57-11 record;
10 during his tenure, JSU won seven conference championships and
11 played in four bowl games; following his retirement from
12 football, he earned a doctorate degree from New York
13 University and became a professor at Jacksonville State
14 University; he continued teaching for 18 years; and

15 WHEREAS, Jacksonville State University awarded him
16 the title of Professor Emeritus and named a building, Salls
17 Hall, in his honor in 1969; he was inducted into the Alabama
18 Sports Hall of Fame, the Westchester County New York Hall of
19 Fame, the Football Foundation Hall of Fame, the Calhoun County
20 Sports Hall of Fame, and the Jacksonville State University
21 Athletic Hall of Fame; he was awarded The University of
22 Alabama National Alumni Association's Paul W. Bryant Alumni
23 Athlete Award in 2003 and received the Johnny Vaught Lifetime
24 Achievement Award from the All-American Football Foundation
25 Hall of Fame; and

26 WHEREAS, in 1962, he pioneered a national program of
27 isometric exercises known as XSXIM (Ten Static Exercises in

1 One Minute) which was widely adopted; in 1995, he authored a
2 book entitled, "Live and Love to Be 100" which promoted
3 attitude, vitamins, and exercise as the way to a better and
4 longer life; he was a former long-time resident of Tuscaloosa
5 and member of St. Francis of Assisi Parish; and

6 WHEREAS, Dr. Salls was predeceased by his parents,
7 Harry Briggs Salls and Mary Veronica McCormick; and his first
8 wife, Margaret Ruger Salls; his survivors include his beloved
9 wife of 33 years, Diane Gainey Gatewood Salls; daughters,
10 Donna Rankin (Carlton), Trisha Conyers (Eddie), and Cherie
11 Schmitz (Scott); son, Donald J. Salls, Jr. (Becky),
12 stepchildren, Tracy Gatewood and Mark Gatewood (Suzy);
13 grandchildren, Joseph Salls, George Elliot Salls, Adam Salls,
14 Wright Gatewood, Celia Gatewood, Luke Gatewood, Justin
15 Williams, Hayden Griess, and Beau Griess; great-grandchildren,
16 Jackson Williams, Griffin Williams, and Salls Williams; and a
17 host of other relatives and many friends; although his
18 presence will be greatly missed, the memories of him will be
19 cherished in the hearts of all who knew and loved him; now
20 therefore,

21 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
22 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the death of Dr. Donald J.
23 Salls is recorded with deep sadness, and this resolution is
24 offered in tribute to his life and with heartfelt sympathy to
25 his family.