

# SJR9 INTRODUCED



1 SJR9  
2 D68YNNN-1  
3 By Senator Waggoner  
4 RFD:  
5 First Read: 06-Feb-25



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SJR\_\_\_ MOURNING THE DEATH AND CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF ROBERT ANDREW FERGUSON.

WHEREAS, it is with profound sorrow and deep regret that we record the passing of Robert Andrew "Drew" Ferguson, on October 1, 2024, at the age of 73; his passing leaves a void in the lives of his loving family, many friends, and the sports community, where he was highly regarded; and

WHEREAS, Drew Ferguson, a Georgia native who earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in Education and Exercise Physiology from the University of Georgia (UGA) in 1974, moved to the great State of Alabama following graduation; he continued his education and earned his Master of Education with an emphasis in Sports Medicine and Exercise Physiology from The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) in 1975; and

WHEREAS, his deep interest in sports medicine and athletic training was heavily influenced by his own health challenges; at six years of age, he contracted a strep infection that led to a lifetime of kidney issues, greatly limiting his ability to participate and excel in sports; his declining health resulted in two successful kidney transplants in 1990 and 2003; and

WHEREAS, furthermore, the tragic death of his younger brother, Don, at the age of 14, due to sudden cardiac arrest



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29 in a school gymnasium in DeKalb County, Georgia, inspired  
30 him to dedicate his life to ensuring the safety of athletes  
31 at all levels of competition, from youth to professional;  
32 and

33 WHEREAS, following his graduation from UGA, Drew  
34 Ferguson launched his professional career in sports medicine  
35 in Birmingham; he served as the Certified Athletic Trainer  
36 for the World Football League, working with the first two  
37 major professional football teams in state history, the  
38 Birmingham Americans and the Birmingham Vulcans; and

39 WHEREAS, in 1975, he and Dr. Kurt Niemann founded the  
40 Sports Medicine Institute of Alabama, which today is  
41 Children's of Alabama Sports Medicine; he remained the  
42 director for over 30 years; and

43 WHEREAS, his dedication to athletic care extended to  
44 his role as head athletic trainer for the UAB Blazers under  
45 the legendary head basketball coach, Gene Bartow, and UAB  
46 Athletics; and

47 WHEREAS, throughout his career, he was a vital  
48 presence at major sporting events in the State of Alabama  
49 and beyond, including his service as USA Basketball's  
50 Certified Athletic Trainer in 1979 at the U.S. Olympic  
51 Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado; Certified  
52 Athletic Trainer for the U.S. Olympic Track and Field teams  
53 at the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia; and Medical  
54 Director for the 2017 U.S. Senior Games, the 2017 Maccabi  
55 Games, and the 2022 World Games, all which were held in  
56 Birmingham; and



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57           WHEREAS, Mr. Ferguson held leadership positions in  
58 numerous local, state, and regional organizations for  
59 certified athletic trainers, health care professionals, and  
60 youth sports safety advocates, including his service as  
61 Secretary/Treasurer (1994-1995) and Chair (1995-2008) of the  
62 Alabama State Board of Athletic Trainers; Member of the  
63 Alabama High School Athletic Association Medical Advisory  
64 Board (2010-2024); Chair of the Public Policy Committee of  
65 the Alabama Concussion Task Force (2010-2024); CEO  
66 (2018-2021) and President (2022-2024) of the CoachSafely  
67 Foundation; and Director of Business Development for UAB  
68 Sports & Exercise Medicine (2021-2024); and

69           WHEREAS, Drew Ferguson took great pride in advocating  
70 for athletes of all ages, skill levels, and statuses, and he  
71 was instrumental in the passage of the 1993 Athletic  
72 Trainers Licensure Act, the 2011 Sports Concussion Act, and  
73 the 2018 Coach Safely Act; and

74           WHEREAS, Mr. Ferguson initiated and coordinated  
75 efforts to put automated external defibrillators (AEDs) in  
76 the City of Birmingham and Jefferson County Schools, and he  
77 worked steadfastly to ensure those devices were operational  
78 and accessible to protect the health, safety, and welfare of  
79 young athletes in those locations; and

80           WHEREAS, while he sought no personal recognition for  
81 his decades of dedication to sports medicine, he received  
82 numerous awards and honors for his service to local  
83 communities throughout the State of Alabama, including  
84 induction into the Alabama Athletic Trainers' Association



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85 Hall of Fame, the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame, and the UAB  
86 Athletics Hall of Fame; and

87 WHEREAS, Drew Ferguson was preceded in death by his  
88 parents, Robert Donald Ferguson and Mary Ann Ingram  
89 Ferguson; brother, Donald Ferguson; and half-sister, Carol  
90 Skinner; he is survived by his loving wife of 46 years,  
91 Diane; sister, Dianne Currans (Bill); aunt, Helen Maginnis;  
92 nephew, Eddie Grace; and nieces, Mary Grace and Lee Anne;  
93 and

94 WHEREAS, Mr. Ferguson's tireless and selfless  
95 dedication to improving the lives of others, particularly  
96 youth, high school, intercollegiate, amateur, international,  
97 and professional athletes, leaves a measurable and profound  
98 impact on the State of Alabama; now therefore,

99 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH  
100 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the death of Robert Andrew  
101 Ferguson is recorded with deep sadness, and this resolution  
102 is offered in tribute to his life and unwavering dedication  
103 to his fellow citizens of the great State of Alabama, along  
104 with heartfelt sympathy to his family, whose grief is shared  
105 by many.

106 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be  
107 communicated to the Alabama House of Representatives and  
108 that an enrolled copy thereof be presented to the family of  
109 Mr. Ferguson.

110 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That, when the Senate  
111 adjourns today, it stands adjourned as a further gesture of  
112 respect for the late Robert Andrew "Drew" Ferguson.