

Thank you. I want to thank my friend Donald Payne for the introduction and the comments he made. I'm proud to be the sponsor of this resolution honoring the Rutgers University women's basketball team and applaud their character and integrity. These remarkable young women are a class act and I'm proud to represent them in Congress.

Rutgers had a Cinderella season that saw them come back from devastating losses, including a 40-point loss to Duke University. They refused to give up and spent their winter break in the gym honing their skills and working to become a better team for the rest of the season.

Under head coach C. Vivian Stringer they finished with a 27-9 record. To cap it off, Rutgers upset University of Connecticut for the first ever Big East championship title. They lost to UConn twice in the regular season.

During the NCAA tournament, they upset top-seeded Duke University in the second round and remained poised with wins against teams playing in their home state. The team brought excitement to the tournament and captured the hearts of basketball fans throughout New Jersey and across the nation. This young team fought through improbable odds to reach their first ever NCAA title game.

Now a day after their loss, outrageous comments were made about the team by Don Imus on his CBS Radio and MSNBC show. The team showed great courage to meet with him so he could see how wrong his sexist and racist comments were. During this emotionally and mentally exhausting ordeal, these young women maintained enormous composure.

The Rutgers University women's basketball players are excellent representatives of the State of New Jersey. While striving to reach lifetime goals, they are great role models for student athletes across the nation.

Through a grueling sports schedule they managed priorities well, maintaining academic excellence, have a combined B+ grade point average and are actively involved in the community. These women are the future leaders of tomorrow.

When faced with adversity they stood in front of the entire nation with dignity and grace. I can speak for Rutgers students, alumni and staff when I say we are immensely proud of this team. They deserve to be honored for their hard work, dedication and heart.

I'm hopeful my colleagues will recognize these fine women by passing this resolution. Thank you again. I yield back the balance of my time.