

**RESOLUTION NO. 1908**

**BILL NO. 35-0091**

**THIRTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS**

**Regular Session**

**2023**

A Resolution honoring and commending Aliyah Boston for her many accomplishments in girls and women's basketball, her contribution as an ambassador for the Territory, and her contribution to women's sports worldwide, and awarding her the Key to the Territory

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**WHEREAS**, Aliyah Boston was born on St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, on December 11, 2001, to Cleone and Algernon Boston; and

**WHEREAS**, from the earliest years, Aliyah was taught by her parents that all things are possible through faith, commitment, and hard work; and

**WHEREAS**, at an early age, Aliyah developed a love for basketball as she watched her older sister Alexis compete; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah soon displayed prodigious talent, becoming one of the only girls to play in the boys' basketball teams and leagues; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah's first basketball coach, Russell Brewley, identified Aliyah, as early as the seventh grade, as a future women's National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) basketball Division I prospect; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2014, to experience a wider competitive environment and for training and coaching opportunities, after a carefully considered family decision, Aliyah and her sister Alexis relocated to Worcester, Massachusetts; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah's parents decided that Aliyah and Alexis should remain in Worcester; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah played four varsity basketball seasons at Worcester Academy, where she led the Hilltoppers to consecutive New England Prep School Athletic Council Class AA Championships in 2018 and 2019, and she is Worcester Academy's all-time leading female scorer; and

**WHEREAS**, during Aliyah's high school tenure, her accomplishments and individual awards included the following:

- Gatorade Massachusetts Player of the Year—2017, 2018, and 2019;
- Naismith All-American Second Team—2019;
- Member of the Women’s Basketball Coaches Association Second Team—2019;
- McDonald All-American—2019, with nine points and 10 rebounds for the winning East team;
- SLAM All-American—2019; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah Boston chose to attend the University of South Carolina, where she made an immediate impact on the already successful basketball program; and

**WHEREAS**, as a sophomore, Aliyah Boston led the Gamecocks to a Finals appearance in the 2021 NCAA women’s basketball championship; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah demonstrated her resilience and determination by embarking upon additional physical and mental training, including working with Virgin Islander and Hall-of-Fame National Basketball Association player, Timothy Duncan, to improve her performance and competitive results; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah Boston led the South Carolina Gamecocks to the 2022 NCAA Women’s Basketball Championship, where she won the Player of the Tournament Award, the Most Valuable Player Award; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah, is one of the most decorated NCAA women’s basketball players in the NCAA’s history, whose awards and commendations include:

- Four-time Lisa Leslie Award—2020-2023
- Three-time Associated Press First-team All-American—2021-2023
- Three-time United States Basketball Writers Association First-team All-American—2021-2023
- Two-Time Women’s Basketball Coaches Association First-team All-American—2021, 2022
- Associated Press Second-team All-American—2020
- United States Basketball Writers Association Second-team All-American—2020
- United States Basketball Writers Association National Freshman of the Year—2020
- Women’s Basketball Coaches Association Freshman of the Year—2020

- Southeastern Conference Freshman of the Year—2020
- Southeastern Conference Tournament Most Valuable Player—2021
- Four-time Southeastern Conference First Team—2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023
- Four-time Southeastern Conference Defensive Player of the Year—2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023
- Four-time Southeastern Conference All-Defensive Team—2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023
- Two-time Academic All-American of the Year, Division-I women's basketball—2021 and 2022
- Two-time Southeastern Conference Player of the Year—2022 and 2023
- Naismith College Player of the Year—2022
- Two-time Naismith Defensive Player of the Year—2022 and 2023
- Awarded the NCAA Final Four Most Valuable Player—2022
- Awarded the John R. Wooden Award—2022
- Awarded National Player of the Year in 2022 by the Associated Press, the United States Basketball Writers Association, and the Women's Basketball Coaches Association; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah has received the following commendations and awards in international competition:

- 2017- International Basketball Association (FIBA) Under-16 Women's Americas Championship Most Valuable Player
- 2018 FIBA Under-17 Women's Basketball World Cup All-Tournament Team; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah followed up her spectacular 2022 season by leading the South Carolina Gamecocks to its first-ever undefeated regular season, another Southeastern Conference title, 37 straight weeks as the Number 1-ranked women's collegiate basketball team in the nation, and its third straight Final Four appearance; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah is one of only two women unanimously selected as All-American First Team in the 2022-2023 season; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah Boston, over the course of her four seasons of collegiate basketball, led the South Carolina Gamecocks to a cumulative record of 129-9, making it the greatest four-year year run in Gamecocks history and one of the five best four-year runs in the history of NCAA women's basketball; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah's success in landing Name, Image, and Likeness endorsements and contracts helped to lead the way to a new era of financial success for female collegiate athletes; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah was selected first in the 2023 WNBA draft by the Indiana Fever, becoming only the second Virgin Islander, after Tim Duncan, to be drafted as the Number 1 pick in any professional sports draft; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah was named the unanimous 2023 WNBA Rookie of the Year by the WNBA on October 2, 2023 receiving all 60 votes from a national panel of sportswriters and broadcasters, making her only the fifth unanimous Rookie of the Year Selection in WNBA history; and she was also awarded the Associated Press Rookie of the Year on September 12, 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to winning the WNBA Rookie of the Year Award, Aliyah led the 2023 WNBA All-Rookie Team; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah shot a WNBA-high 57.8 percent from the field, becoming the first rookie to lead the league in that category in a season while also averaging 14.5 points, 8.4 rebounds, 2.2 assists, 1.3 steals, and 1.3 blocked shots in 31.2 minutes per game while playing in 40 games; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah was selected as a starter for the 2023 WNBA All-Star Game, becoming the sixth rookie to start an All-Star Game and the first since 2014, and she was named the WNBA Rookie of the Month in three of the four months of the season (May, June, and August); and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah led all WNBA rookies in points, rebounds, steals, blocks, and minutes per game, and she became the first rookie in league history to have at least 550 total points and 325 total rebounds in a season, her rebounding total (335) was the second highest by a first-year WNBA player, behind Tina Charles (398 in 2010); and

**WHEREAS**, making an immediate impact in the WNBA, Aliyah averaged 15.8 points and shot 70.9 percent from the field in her first six games of the season, and she finished the season with a rookie-leading 11 double-doubles; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah scored 20 points and a career-high 14 rebounds to go with three assists, two steals, and two blocks against the Las Vegas Aces on June 26, marking the second time a WNBA rookie ever reached each of those five totals in a game; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 1, 2023, against the Dallas Wings, Aliyah recorded 27 points, 11 rebounds and five assists, making her the fifth rookie to have at least 25 points, 10 rebounds, and five assists in a game; and

**WHEREAS**, Aliyah, although completing only one year in professional sports, is already branching out into endeavors off the court, as NBC Sports announced on October 9, 2023, that she will be joining the network as a studio analyst for women’s Big Ten basketball games during the 2023-2024 college basketball season; Now, Therefore

*Be it resolved by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:*

**SECTION 1.** The Legislature of the Virgin Islands, on behalf of the people of the Virgin Islands, honors and commends Aliyah Boston for her accomplishments in girls and women’s basketball, and her contribution as an ambassador for the Territory.

**SECTION 2.** The Legislature of the Virgin Islands, on behalf of the people of the Virgin Islands, honors and commends Aliyah Boston for her accomplishments in girls and women’s basketball, her contribution as an ambassador for the Territory, and her contribution to women’s sports worldwide by presenting her with a Key to the Territory.


**SECTION 3.** The President of the Legislature, or the President’s designee, shall present to Aliyah Boston a perma plaque of this Resolution and the official Key to the Territory at an appropriate ceremony.

Thus passed by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands on November 14, 2023.

Witness our Hands and Seal of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands this 16<sup>th</sup> Day of November, A.D., 2023.



  
Novelle E. Francis, Jr.  
President

  
Carla J. Joseph  
Secretary