

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 49th Legislature (2004)

SENATE
RESOLUTION 79

By: Pruitt

AS INTRODUCED

A Resolution celebrating the centennial of organized baseball in Oklahoma; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, the first organized game of baseball played in Oklahoma was in Krebs in Indian Territory on July 4, 1882. Three hundred spectators watched the game which was played on an open prairie. Players used sacks of hay and cans for bases as Krebs beat nearby Savanna 35-4; and

WHEREAS, baseball was played everywhere in Oklahoma during the 25 years before statehood. It was played on wheat or corn fields on the outskirts of cities and villages. Baseball was a source of great community pride as men and women, dressed in their Sunday best, supported their local team while sitting on makeshift bleachers; and

WHEREAS, Oklahoma's first professional baseball player was Kid Bevis, a 14-year-old fireballer from Mulhall, who broke into the minor leagues for Kansas City in the spring of 1896; and

WHEREAS, organized baseball did not come to Oklahoma until 1904, when Oklahoma City joined the Southwestern League. The Oklahoma City Mets won the pennant in the league that featured teams from Guthrie, Shawnee, Chickasha, and El Reno. The Southwestern League was the first of 15 different minor leagues which would field teams in Oklahoma over the next century; and

WHEREAS, eventually, 37 cities and towns in Oklahoma had professional baseball clubs. Some of the more memorable early

leagues were named the Sooner State League, the Oklahoma-Kansas League, the Texas League, and the Western Association. But in the 1960s, only Oklahoma City and Tulsa had professional minor league teams as the major leagues discontinued Class C and Class D farm teams; and

WHEREAS, hundreds of major leaguers played their early baseball seasons in Oklahoma. In fact, ten percent of all the 14,000 men who have played in the majors since 1876 have come through Oklahoma. They either were born here, died here, or played minor league, college, or sandlot baseball in Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, on the first floor of the Oklahoma State Capitol hangs a portrait of the state's most well-known baseball player, Mickey Mantle, as a clear indication that no state can claim a baseball heritage like Oklahoma.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 49TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

THAT the Oklahoma State Senate recognizes and celebrates the centennial of organized baseball in Oklahoma.

THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to the nation's Number One Baseball Fan, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America; Oklahoma's Congressional Delegation; Oklahoma City Mayor Mick Cornett; Bud Selig, Commissioner of Major League Baseball; Mike Moore, President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues, Inc. (NAPBL); President Branch B. Rickey III of the Pacific Coast League; and Bob Burke, Red Hawks Club Historian and author of "Glory Days of Summer".