

## SCR003S01 compared with SCR003

~~text~~ shows text that was in SCR003 but was deleted in SCR003S01.

text shows text that was not in SCR003 but was inserted into SCR003S01.

**DISCLAIMER:** This document is provided to assist you in your comparison of the two bills. Sometimes this automated comparison will NOT be completely accurate. Therefore, you need to read the actual bills. This automatically generated document could contain inaccuracies caused by: limitations of the compare program; bad input data; or other causes.

Senator Jani Iwamoto proposes the following substitute bill:

### CONCURRENT RESOLUTION HONORING WATARU MISAKA

2020 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Jani Iwamoto**

House Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

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#### LONG TITLE

#### General Description:

This concurrent resolution honors Wataru Misaka.

#### Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- ▶ honors the late Wataru "Wat" Misaka, who was the first person of color to play in what is now the National Basketball Association; and
- ▶ recognizes Mr. Misaka's athletic abilities and contributions to college and professional basketball.

#### Special Clauses:

None

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*Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

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WHEREAS, Wataru "Wat" Misaka, who broke the color barrier by being the first person of color to play in what is now the National Basketball Association (NBA), died on November ~~20~~21, 2019, in Salt Lake City at the age of 95;

WHEREAS, born and raised in Ogden, Wat Misaka was a 5-foot-7-inch tall Japanese American whose basketball career began at Ogden High School where he led his team to the 1940 state championship and regional championship in 1941;

WHEREAS, in 1942, his Weber Junior College basketball team won the Intermountain Collegiate Athletic Conference (ICAC) junior college title and he was named "most valuable player" of that year's junior college post-season tournament;

WHEREAS, in 1943, the Weber Junior College team earned another ICAC title and the college named him "athlete of the year";

WHEREAS, Mr. Misaka enrolled at the University of Utah and helped lead the basketball team to win the 1944 National Collegiate Athletic Association championship over Dartmouth;

WHEREAS, his teammate and close friend Arnie Ferrin said in recognition of Mr. Misaka's humility and kindness in the face of racial taunts and pressures, "We achieved things that a lot of people never will. He made us a better team and made me a better person. I can't say I had anyone I enjoyed being around more than Wat.";

WHEREAS, while fellow Japanese Americans were interned in concentration camps, Mr. Misaka took a two-year pause from college and served in the United States Army during World War II;

WHEREAS, Mr. Misaka rose to the rank of staff sergeant and was assigned to the U.S. strategic bombing survey where his job was to interview the citizens of Hiroshima about their morale after the bombing;

WHEREAS, upon completing his military service, Mr. Misaka returned to the University of Utah basketball team and, by holding the Kentucky Wildcats' All-American and "player of the year" guard Ralph Beard to just one point, the University of Utah won the 1947 National Invitation Tournament championship;

WHEREAS, through his heart and exciting play, Wat won the support of the Madison Square Garden crowd, so much so that they booed when he was not named MVP for the tournament;

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WHEREAS, his New York fame and fan base was such that the owner of the New York Knicks, Ned Irish, signed Mr. Misaka as the first ever collegiate draft pick of the New York Knicks for a salary of \$3,000 per year, making him the first person of color to start a game in what is now known as the NBA, preceding the first African American to play in the NBA by three years;

WHEREAS, Mr. Misaka was referred to as "Hawaiian American" to make his ethnicity more acceptable;

WHEREAS, after the Knicks cut Mr. Misaka, he declined an invitation to join the Harlem Globetrotters and returned to the University of Utah, earning a degree in engineering and subsequently working as ~~an electrical~~ a mechanical engineer;

WHEREAS, later in life, Mr. Misaka was honored for his athletic achievements through his induction into the Utah Sports Hall of Fame, the Japanese American Sports Hall of Fame, and the Weber State University Hall of Fame;

WHEREAS, Mr. Misaka was also included in the diversity display of Hoop Hall, the professional basketball Hall of Fame;

WHEREAS, in 2008, Mr. Misaka was the subject of a documentary, "Transcending: The Wat Misaka Story," permanently available at the Library of Congress;

WHEREAS, in 2009, President Obama invited Mr. Misaka to the White House to honor him for being the first player of color in the NBA;

WHEREAS, in December 2009, the New York Knicks honored Mr. Misaka at a Knicks' game in Madison Square Garden and presented him with an honorary No. 15 jersey;

WHEREAS, Mr. Misaka was recognized by the Japanese American Citizens League in 2011 for his championship spirit and leadership role in inspiring sports fans to look beyond race during the 1940's when anti-Japanese sentiment was at an all-time high;

WHEREAS, in addition to Mr. Misaka's basketball achievements, as an avid golfer he had two hole-in-ones and enjoyed backpacking in the Uinta Mountains and the Wind Rivers, with and without llamas;

WHEREAS, Mr. Misaka had a 189 bowling average and a high game of 299 in 2003 at the age of 80;

WHEREAS, Mr. Misaka was inducted into the Japanese American National Bowling Association Hall of Fame and the Salt Lake City Bowling Hall of Fame;

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WHEREAS, Mr. Misaka's contribution to college and professional basketball as a Japanese American during times of racial discrimination merits recognition; and

WHEREAS, his accomplishments were covered in obituaries by the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, ESPN, Sports Illustrated, MSN Sports, NPR, and the NBA:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein, honors the memory of Wat "Kilowatt" Misaka and his legacy of being the first person of color to play professional basketball.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to Mr. Misaka's family.