



Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

Legislation Text

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A resolution recognizing the achievements of Nashvillian and Olympian Alex Walsh.

WHEREAS, Alex Walsh was born on July 31, 2001 in Nashville, Tennessee and began swimming at age five at the Jewish Community Center, competing in the Nashville Swim League's summer swimming program and City Meet in 2007. Since then she established herself as a prodigy, developing all four strokes well and breaking multiple national age-group records starting at age 12; and

WHEREAS, after living in Greenwich, Connecticut, the Walsh family returned to Nashville in 2014 so that Alex and her sister and fellow swimmer Gretchen could attend the Harpeth Hall School and train with the Nashville Aquatic Club (NAC); and

WHEREAS, Walsh trained in the Tracy Caulkins Competition Pool at Metro Nashville Parks' Centennial Sportsplex, with Nashville Aquatic Club (NAC) coaches John Morse and Doug Wharam for six years, swimming two hours a day, five days a week, and four hours on Saturdays; and

WHEREAS, since 1975, NAC has trained fourteen Olympians, and in 2016, as a rising ninth-grader, Walsh competed in her first U.S. Olympic Trials, an experience she said molded her goals in the sport; and

WHEREAS, as a member of the Harpeth Hall "Bearacudas" swim team, coached by Polly Linden, four-time Tennessee Interscholastic Coaches Association (TISCA) Coach of the Year, Alex helped win two state championships in 2017 and 2018 and was named the (TISCA) Swimmer of the Year all four years of high school; and

WHEREAS, Walsh holds three individual State records in 200 freestyle, 100 backstroke, and in the 100 breaststroke, which is also a National Independent Schools record. The Harpeth Hall Bearacudas were named the Girls' High School National Champions by Swimming World Magazine in 2018 and 2019; and

WHEREAS, Walsh also excelled in international competition during high school, earning a silver medal in the 400-freestyle relay and 400-medley relay at the FINA World Junior Championships in 2017, placing first in the 200-meter individual relay and 400-freestyle relay at the 2018 Junior Pan Pacific Swimming Championships, and in earning three gold medals in the 2019 Pan American Games; and

WHEREAS, Alex was the #2 collegiate swimming recruit in the Class of 2020 and currently swims for the University of Virginia Cavaliers coached by Todd DeSorbo. As a freshman in 2021, she won both the NCAA 200 individual medley title and anchored the Cavaliers' 800 freestyle winning relay team, which helped UVA win its first NCAA team championship in the history of the program; and

WHEREAS, in the summer of 2021, out of 1,425 swimmers qualified to race in the Olympic Trials in Omaha, Nebraska, Alex was one of only 53 swimmers to secure a place on the USA Olympic Team. She was one of 35 first time Olympic swimmers, one of 28 women and one of eleven teenagers swimming for the USA in Tokyo; and

WHEREAS, Walsh advanced through Olympic preliminary and semi-final races in the 200 Individual Medley (IM), and on July 27, 2021, Walsh swam a strong and thrilling final race earning second place in the women's 200-meter individual medley and a silver medal with a personal best time of 2:08:65, just 13 hundredths of a

second behind Japanese gold medalist Yui Ohashi; and

WHEREAS, with Alex's UVA teammate Kate Douglass winning bronze, the young women were able to celebrate together, the first time the USA had earned two medals in the 200 IM race since the Olympic games in 1984 when fellow Harpeth Hall alumna Tracy Caulkins was the 200 IM gold medalist; and

WHEREAS, Alex Walsh is the fourth Harpeth Hall alumna to compete in the Olympic Games joining runner Margaret Groos Sloan ('77), Tracy Caulkins Stockwell ('81), and equestrian Linden Wiesman Ryan ('93); and

WHEREAS, Alex represented Harpeth Hall, NAC, the City of Nashville, the State of Tennessee, and the United States of America with distinction and is a role model to young swimmers and athletes of all ages, especially those from Nashville; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that the Metropolitan Council recognize Alex Walsh for her years of diligent work and determination, congratulate her on her achievement at the 2020/2021 Olympics, and wish her continued success in her swimming career.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. The Metropolitan Council hereby goes on record as recognizing the many achievements of Alex Walsh and further congratulates her on winning a silver medal at the 2020/2021 Olympics in Tokyo.

Section 2. The Metropolitan Council Office is directed to prepare a copy of this Resolution to be presented to Alex Walsh.

Section 3. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.