

South Dakota Legislature



Senate Commemoration 811

Introduced by: **Senators** Davis, Deibert, Nesiba, Schoenfish, Stalzer, and Zikmund and **Representatives** Duba, Kassin, Koth, Perry, Pinnow, Reisch, Shorma, Stevens, and Weisgram

A LEGISLATIVE COMMEMORATION, Recognizing Coach Ben Irlbeck for his coaching success and exemplary service to his community.

WHEREAS, Ben is a resident of Elk Point and serves as a city council member; and

WHEREAS, as a member of the city council, Ben has served multiple leadership roles, most importantly as Council Vice President; and

WHEREAS, Ben attended Dakota Wesleyan University, where he was awarded both a bachelor's and master's degree; and

WHEREAS, while a student-athlete at Dakota Wesleyan University, Ben served as senior golf team captain and two-time all-Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC) selection for the Dakota Wesleyan Tigers; and

WHEREAS, Ben won the South Dakota Golf Association (SDGA) Men's Match Play tournament in 2012 and represented South Dakota in the United States Golf Association (USGA) Men's State Team Championship in 2013; and

WHEREAS, Ben earned the SDGA Golfer of the Year award in 2012, and SDGA Match Play Championship runner-up finishes in 2005, 2010, and 2015; and

WHEREAS, in the summer of 2016, Ben turned professional and played in multiple Dakota's Mini-Tour events, during which his best finish was T5 at the Dakota Dunes Country Club in 2018; and

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WHEREAS, Ben has served as the head men's and women's golf coach since joining the Briar Cliff University Chargers program during the 2013-14 season; and

WHEREAS, during the 2016-17 season, Ben was named the GPAC Women's Golf Coach of the Year after coaching the women's golf team to their first-ever GPAC conference title. The title not only marked the first-ever GPAC Championship for the women's golf team but was also the first conference title win for any women's team at Briar Cliff University; and

WHEREAS, for the first time since 2017, the Briar Cliff University women's golf team has been crowned the 2023 GPAC Champions, with an automatic bid for the eleventh time in program history to the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) National Championships, finishing twenty-eighth overall at the national competition; and

WHEREAS, Ben's accomplishments on the golf course, both as an outstanding athlete and as a coach, as well as his public service as a council member and service to his community are extraordinary:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT COMMEMORATED, by the Ninety-Ninth Legislature of the State of South Dakota, that the Legislature recognizes Coach Ben Irlbeck for his service to, and promotion of, his community and the sport of golf.