

# **Black History Month 2014: The Native Sons and Daughters of Alabama**

## **Honoring Midfield High School As Alabama's Class 3A Boy's State Basketball Champions**

**March 5, 2014**

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Midfield High School Patriots for their victory in the 2014 Class 3A Alabama State Basketball Championship. On behalf of the 7th Congressional District, I congratulate the Patriots for the tremendous athleticism and teamwork they displayed throughout the season under the outstanding leadership of Head Coach Darrell Barber and his coaching staff. Midfield High School won its second state championship in three years with its victory over Barbour County on Saturday, March 1. These young men and their coaches pursued excellence and were driven by hard work and determination during every game of the season. The Patriots finished the season undefeated in their region and lost only 7 games overall.

As the daughter of a high school basketball coach, I know this decisive victory is the result of the tremendous efforts of both the players and coaching staff of Midfield High School. Coach Barber is known for setting high expectations for his players and assisting them in meeting those expectations. The exemplary leadership and dedicated support from the coaching staff was a major factor in the success of the Midfield Patriots.

In the championship game, the Midfield Patriots defeated Barbour County by 22 points for a final score of 62-40. The Patriots forced 11 turnovers, but only gave up the ball seven times.

In the second half, the Midfield Patriots led by as many as 25 points and never less than 13 points. During the entire fourth quarter, the Patriots never led by less than 20 points. Tournament MVP Aaron Gaines scored 22 points with four 3-pointers. Alvin Murry completed the game with 15 points and 10 rebounds. Jermaine Turner scored 11 points and made eight assists and seven rebounds.

Following the victory, Head Coach Darrell Barber thanked God, his family and the Midfield community for supporting the Patriots throughout the season. He explained how the nay-sayers gave the team motivation making them more dedicated to win. "It gave us a little fuel," he told Al.com following the victory. "As you all know myself and my guys, we play with a chip on our shoulder and we coach with a chip on our shoulder to get this program recognition."

Winning the state championship is a proud moment these boys achieved through hard work and commitment. Members of the team include: Eric Billups, Kelvin Eatmon, Aaron Gaines, Ahmad Isaac, Derrick Morse, Jabril Muhammad, Alvin Murry, Joseph Murry, Jeremy Shields, Jermaine Turner, and Cedric Russell.

I would like to commend the Midfield coaching staff under the leadership of Head Coach Darrell Barber and the assistant coaches including Coaches Matthew Epps, Courtney Jones, and Charles Thomas and the bus driver, Mr. Rod Isaac.

On behalf of the 7th Congressional District, the State of Alabama and this nation, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the accomplishments of the Midfield High School Boys Basketball Team for their victory in the Class 3A Alabama State Championship. Congratulations. Go Patriots.