

## **Floor speech: HCR 204**

Commemorates victory by University of Oregon's football program in 2012 Rose Bowl

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2011 was a great year for the University of Oregon Ducks, and for Duck fans. By December, the team had **won 11 games**, with its only defeats coming against teams that finished the year ranked among the top six in the nation.

By December, the Ducks had **played nine times before a national television audience**. Of the ten highest-rated college football broadcasts of the year, The Ducks account for three, gaining new attention for their efforts, and new visibility for the University and for the state. Additionally, the nationally televised Saturday **College Game Day show** aired live from Oregon for the fifth time in five years - each one representing two-hour promo spot for the school and for our state.

And throughout that fall season, the Ducks got up at 6 AM, they trained, they practiced, they went to class, studied, and did community service. I asked them how. They are an inspiration to me, the way they talk about self-discipline and keeping the rhythm.

**By New Year's Eve**, thousands of Oregonians headed south to California, to watch the Ducks play in the Rose Bowl. On Jan. 2nd **over 30,000** fans from Oregon and beyond flocked to the stadium in Pasadena, already proud of their Ducks. That **was one of the most exciting Rose Bowl games** ever. The Ducks and Wisconsin Badgers combined to score the most points, and Oregon's De'Anthony Thomas had the longest run, in the Rose Bowl's 110-year history.

With this resolution, we recognize the University of Oregon football team -- the **Fighting Ducks -- for being crowned champions of the 2012 Rose Bowl**, the second such crowning for the University of Oregon football team - and that earlier one was in 1917. The University of Oregon was represented in a **BCS** (Bowl Championship Series) game for **three consecutive years**, the only university in the country to have that distinction in 2011.

I won't read the entire resolution verbatim to you. **What's not included** in the flowery words are some of the other stats that we know people around the nation have taken notice of, like almost always losing the time of possession battle; we watched those lightning drives - scoring in less than two minutes, and the next time, under a minute! The energetic style, fast-paced offense and swarming defense have people's attention.

**And I'd like to tell you some things you haven't heard about this team**, and this athletic program ...

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Every member of this team - every single student athlete - has participated in the **O Heroes program**, a community service initiative made up entirely of UO student-athletes. Football players, specifically, took part in a variety of public services, including visiting schools and hospitals, hosting educational workshops, raising money for the homeless, signing and sending footballs to young people with cancer, and being pen pals with active duty United States military service personnel.

Junior Michael Clay, a linebacker who recovered a key fumble to all but seal Oregon's Rose Bowl victory, was named the male recipient of the annual O Heroes Cup, awarded on a points system to the student-athlete with the highest rate of participation in a variety of activities.

As for **academic achievements**, no football team in the Pacific-12 Conference had more total members receive academic accolades than the University of Oregon. Highlighting the U of O contingent was offensive lineman Carson York's inclusion on the elite Academic All-America squad. A junior offensive lineman, York already holds an undergraduate degree in Advertising and carries a 3.76 grade-point as he embarks on a master's degree.

The football program has brought pride to Oregon. The community service and academic achievements of the individual players bring honor to the program and joy to the kids – and adults – who meet them. Oregonians are proud of their Ducks, and we're happy to see some of them in the Capitol with us today. Please join me in voting for HCR 204.