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## **PAT SUMMITT HAS SOME IMPORTANT DECISIONS TO MAKE NOW**

By: Sabrina Winters, Attorney at Law

As the coach of the Lady Vols basketball program at the University of Tennessee, Pat Summitt has amassed a legendary record with her teams winning 8 NCAA Championships, 29 SEC tournaments and regular season championships. She elevated the program to the highest level in women's collegiate sports while always crediting her success to her players.

As an athlete, you can imagine how in tune Summitt must need to be with her body. She knew something was wrong. After wrapping up her 37th year coaching the University of Tennessee's Lady Vols basketball team, she decided to seek medical attention. "I just felt something was different," she explained in an interview with the Washington Post's Sally Jenkins. After months of erratic behavior Summitt headed north to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. In early May, she was diagnosed with early-onset dementia, Alzheimer's type.

ESPN medical analyst, Dr. Michael Kaplan, has commented that her biggest challenge may be her lack of control. But for right now, she is feeling strong and will continue to coach.

I am not certain whether Summitt has her estate plan in order. However, if she doesn't I would certainly advise her that for right now at least, she has the ability to control her treatment and how she will be cared for in her final days, and should absolutely get those advanced directives in place TODAY!

She was divorced a few years ago, has a 20-year-old son Ross "Tyler" and mother-daughter yellow Lab retrievers, Sally-Sue and Sadie. Knowing her condition, she needs to make provisions for her son via a Will or a Revocable Trust. It is also imperative that she put in writing what her medical wishes are. I am certain that her heart is breaking with the thought that her son has to watch her as her health deteriorates at some point. It is heart wrenching to think

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that a child may need to make these medical decisions for a parent. But, if she does not want this, then she needs to nominate someone to make these decisions for her.

This is a difficult time in her life and she is probably wanting to deal with this head on. Right now is the time for her to put these plans into place while she still has the capacity to do so.

I wish her and her family many well wishes not only during this time but also for the future.

If you have elderly parents or loved ones that do not have these plans in place, call our office at 704-843-1446 and we can help implement an estate plan that will work.