

By: Senator(s) Frazier, Horhn, Walls,
Harden, Jordan (24th), Jackson, Turner

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 550

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO COMMEND THE LIFE OF AUTHOR AND
2 EDUCATOR MARGARET WALKER ALEXANDER.

3 WHEREAS, Margaret Walker Alexander, author, poet and
4 professor, was a native of Birmingham, Alabama; and

5 WHEREAS, she attended Methodist church schools in the South
6 including Haven in Meridian, was a 1930 graduate of Gilbert
7 Academy of New Orleans University, and received her bachelor of
8 arts degree from Northwestern University in 1935; and

9 WHEREAS, she earned masters and doctoral degrees from the
10 University of Iowa; and

11 WHEREAS, best known for Jubilee, her 1966 novel about slave
12 life, her writing first appeared in Crisis magazine in 1934. In
13 1972, she received the Yale Award for Young Poets for her book of
14 poetry, For My People; and

15 WHEREAS, in 1954, she was a Ford Fellow at Yale University
16 and received a literary fellowship in 1968, a Fulbright Hayes
17 Fellowship in 1972 and Senior Fellowship from the National
18 Endowment for the Humanities; and

19 WHEREAS, Dr. Alexander was the author of nine books,
20 including five volumes of poetry; she lectured at seminars and
21 literary festivals throughout the country, and taught at
22 Livingstone College, West Virginia State College, the University
23 of Iowa, Northwestern University and Jackson State University,
24 where she taught English; and

25 WHEREAS, Margaret Walker Alexander founded the Institute for
26 the Study of History, Life and Culture of Black People at Jackson

27 State and served as its director for eleven years; and

28 WHEREAS, the institute she founded was later renamed for her,
29 as was a Jackson Public Library and the street, Margaret Walker
30 Alexander Drive, on which she lived; and

31 WHEREAS, she received the Living Legacy Award from President
32 Jimmy Carter and was inducted into the African American Literary
33 Hall of Fame at her last public appearance in Chicago, and
34 received the lifetime achievement award from Chicago State
35 University; and

36 WHEREAS, she was a member of Central United Methodist Church,
37 life member of the National Association for the Advancement of
38 Colored Persons and a "Golden Girl" member of Alpha Kappa Alpha
39 Sorority; and

40 WHEREAS, she was the widow of Firnist James Alexander, Sr.,
41 to whom she was married 37 years, and is survived by her
42 daughters, Marion Elizabeth Coleman and Margaret Elvira Williams
43 and sons Firnist James Alexander, Jr. and Sigismund Walker
44 Alexander; and

45 WHEREAS, one of her life missions was to help aspiring
46 writers; and

47 WHEREAS, she did honor to Mississippi and to the nation; and

48 WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to commend the
49 accomplishments of the citizens of Mississippi:

50 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
51 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
52 we do hereby commend the life and career of Dr. Margaret Walker
53 Alexander, who lived a long, fruitful and giving life, and extend
54 our sympathy of a grateful state to her family, relatives and
55 friends, and all who are saddened by her passing.

56 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
57 presented to her children and to the Capitol Press Corps.