

By: Senator(s) White (29th)

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 603

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING HAROLD RAY WATSON FOR HIS
2 MANY YEARS OF CONTRIBUTIONS AND DEDICATED SERVICE AS AN
3 AGRICULTURAL EVANGELIST.

4 WHEREAS, Harold Ray Watson was born April 17, 1934, on a farm
5 in Brooklyn, Mississippi, 14 miles south of Hattiesburg,
6 Mississippi; and

7 WHEREAS, Harold Ray Watson studied at McLaurin Elementary
8 School and Forest County Agricultural High School, graduating from
9 high school in 1952; and

10 WHEREAS, after graduation, Harold Ray Watson served in the
11 United States Air Force from 1952 to 1956, where he was stationed
12 at Randolph Air Force Base Texas, as a clerk, and soon volunteered
13 to organize church activities for children; and

14 WHEREAS, the satisfaction he found in youth work, and his
15 growing personal Christian commitment, suggested to Watson a
16 career in the ministry, and eventually he gave himself wholly to
17 the "call" and determined to study for the ministry upon
18 discharge; and

19 WHEREAS, Watson was discharged from the Air Force in 1956,
20 and within a week married Elizabeth Joyce Daniel, whom he had met
21 in Texas and who would become his life-long mission partner; and

22 WHEREAS, Harold Ray Watson attended Hinds Junior College in
23 Raymond, Mississippi, for one year, and then transferred to
24 Mississippi State University to pursue an undergraduate degree in
25 agriculture; and

26 WHEREAS, since Christian fellowship and volunteer church work

27 were central to the young couple's life at Starkville,
28 Mississippi, Harold Ray Watson was asked to be the Baptist pastor
29 at the nearby Union Church, and soon, another church in Ashland,
30 Mississippi, invited him to preach on alternate Sundays; and

31 WHEREAS, Harold Ray Watson received his Bachelor of Science
32 degree in 1959, and Master of Science degree in 1960, in
33 agriculture from Mississippi State University; and

34 WHEREAS, after spending one year at Southwestern Baptist
35 Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and one year teaching
36 vocational agriculture at North Forest High School in Eatonville,
37 Mississippi, Harold Ray Watson applied to the Foreign Mission
38 Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and received an
39 appointment as agricultural evangelist to the Philippines in May
40 1964; and

41 WHEREAS, from 1965 to 1970, Watson served at Southern Baptist
42 College in M'Lang, Cotabato, on the island of Mindanao, as an
43 agricultural consultant and also worked with rural farmers and
44 churches in the area; and

45 WHEREAS, in 1971, Harold Ray Watson opened the Mindanao
46 Baptist Rural Life Center, a training center for farmers which
47 integrated agricultural development with Bible teaching and church
48 planting and development, and served as director for the center
49 until his retirement in 1997; and

50 WHEREAS, in 1998, Harold Ray Watson established the Asian
51 Rural Life Development Foundation for the purpose of extending
52 agricultural technologies for poor upland farmers to other
53 countries in Asia, and later, developed various farming
54 technologies for small farmers of Mindanao, such as FAITH
55 gardening (Food Always In The Home) and SALT (Sloping Agricultural
56 Land Technology); and

57 WHEREAS, Harold Ray Watson received many honors and awards
58 during his service as an agricultural missionary, including the
59 Achievement Award in Technology Development from the Crop Science

60 Society of the Philippines (1984); the Ramon Magsaysay Award in
61 International Understanding for his encouraging international
62 utilization of the SALT technology created by him and his
63 co-workers to help the poorest of small tropical farmers (1985);
64 the Outstanding Farm Technology Award from the Department of
65 Science and Technology of the Philippine Government; the citation
66 from President Corazon C. Aquino, President of the Philippines,
67 for his work with poor upland farmers in the Philippines
68 (presented in Washington, D.C. during her visit to the United
69 States); the World Food Day Award presented by Food and
70 Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations for his
71 efforts in promoting an awareness of the dangers in unlimited
72 exploitation of the world's forests and for the development and
73 promulgation of technologies promoting the use of trees to
74 conserve the soil and minimize erosion on steep hillsides; and

75 WHEREAS, Harold Ray Watson returned to the United States in
76 November 1997, for final furlough until retirement on January 31,
77 1999, and presently resides in Terry, Mississippi; and

78 WHEREAS, Harold and Joyce Watson have three children, James
79 Allen of Madison, Mississippi, presently the State Veterinarian
80 for the State of Mississippi; Daniel Gene of Walnut Ridge,
81 Arkansas, presently on staff of William Baptist College; and Mark
82 Bradley of Cumming, Georgia, presently a computer analyst at AT&T;
83 and

84 WHEREAS, Harold and Joyce Watson have a total of 14
85 grandchildren, ages one month to 15 years; and

86 WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to commend the
87 tireless devotion and dedicated service of its citizens:

88 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
89 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
90 we do hereby commend Harold Ray Watson for his many years of
91 contributions and dedicated service as an agricultural evangelist.

92 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be

93 furnished to Harold Ray Watson and made available to the Capitol
94 Press Corps.