

By: Senator(s) Hamilton, Canon, Turner

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 89  
(As Adopted by Senate)

1 A RESOLUTION COMMENDING RICHARD E. SMITH, JR., UPON HIS  
2 RETIREMENT AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE REGIONAL  
3 AIRPORT.

4 WHEREAS, Richard E. Smith, Jr., a native of Tunica,  
5 Mississippi, has recently announced his retirement as Executive  
6 Director of the Golden Triangle Regional Airport; and

7 WHEREAS, his retirement marks the culmination of his career  
8 at the Golden Triangle Regional Airport where he served as  
9 executive director for twenty years, and propelled the Golden  
10 Triangle Regional Airport to the cutting edge as it is now  
11 nationally recognized as a model non-hub airport; and

12 WHEREAS, Smith's expertise and foresight were recognized  
13 nationwide through his appointment by Senator Trent Lott to the  
14 National Civil Aviation Review Commission, a commission charged  
15 with investigating alternative means of funding and efficiency for  
16 the nation's civil aviation programs, including the Federal  
17 Aviation Administration, and with ensuring the safety of this  
18 nation's airports; and

19 WHEREAS, one of Smith's major accomplishments was  
20 successfully leading the project to totally renovate the Golden  
21 Triangle Regional Airport terminal building which was first  
22 erected in 1971; and

23 WHEREAS, the terminal building was restructured from 16,000  
24 to 31,000 square feet and was redesigned to more efficiently  
25 handle the needs of the Golden Triangle traveling public into the  
26 21st Century and to provide a favorable first impression of the

27 Golden Triangle area, which is so important to the industrial and  
28 economic development of the region; and

29 WHEREAS, Richard Smith, Jr., was able to negotiate the  
30 funding of the Golden Triangle Regional Airport terminal building  
31 renovation project utilizing Airport Improvement Program  
32 entitlement funds tied to a long-term Federal Aviation  
33 Administration Letter of Intent, the first time an FAA Letter of  
34 Intent was funded with entitlement funding; and

35 WHEREAS, Richard Smith, Jr., guided the Golden Triangle  
36 Regional Airport governing body through restructure in 1987 from a  
37 joint board to the current Golden Triangle Regional Airport  
38 Authority Board under the statutes of the State of Mississippi for  
39 more efficient operations of the airport; and

40 WHEREAS, through his management and leadership, the Golden  
41 Triangle Regional Airport became fiscally self-sufficient in 1987;  
42 and

43 WHEREAS, Richard Smith, Jr., led the way on such important  
44 issues as access to aircraft for the handicapped as the Golden  
45 Triangle Regional Airport was the first regional airport in the  
46 nation to implement the use of the handicapped lift device; and

47 WHEREAS, Richard Smith, Jr., is recognized by his peers as a  
48 leader in aviation associations such as the American Association  
49 of Airport Executives, the Southeastern Airport Managers  
50 Association/Southeastern Chapter of the American Association of  
51 Airport Executives, and the Mississippi Airports Association; and

52 WHEREAS, Richard Smith, Jr., was awarded the first ever  
53 Southeastern Airport Managers Association/Southeastern Chapter of  
54 the AAAE Leadership Award, and has served as President of the  
55 Southeastern Airport Managers Association and the Mississippi  
56 Airports Association; and

57 WHEREAS, Richard Smith, Jr., served in the United States Air  
58 Force from September 1956 until August 1978, retiring as a  
59 Lieutenant Colonel; and

60 WHEREAS, he flew a variety of fighter-type aircraft,  
61 including F-105D's in Southeast Asia out of Takli Air Force Base,  
62 Thailand, was shot down on his 33rd mission on October 25, 1967,  
63 over Hanoi, and was a prisoner of war for five and one-half years;

64 and

65 WHEREAS, Richard Smith, Jr., received numerous military  
66 decorations, including two Silver Stars, two Distinguished Flying  
67 Crosses, the Legion of Merit, two Air Medals, two Purple Hearts,  
68 the POW Medal, the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, the Meritorious  
69 Service Medal and other military decorations; and

70 WHEREAS, he served as National President of the Air Force  
71 Association from 1994 to 1996 and Chairman of the Board from 1996  
72 to 1998; and

73 WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to commend the  
74 exemplary service of its citizens:

75 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
76 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commend Richard E. Smith, Jr., upon  
77 his retirement as Executive Director of the Golden Triangle  
78 Regional Airport, and wish him success in his future endeavors.

79 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be  
80 furnished to Richard E. Smith, Jr., and made available to the  
81 Capitol Press Corps.