

By: Senator(s) Jordan (24th)

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 93

1 A RESOLUTION COMMENDING IRVIN L. WHITTAKER UPON HIS
2 RETIREMENT AS LEFLORE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION.

3 WHEREAS, Irvin L. Whittaker has recently announced his
4 retirement as Leflore County Superintendent of Education, bringing
5 a 36-year education career to a close; and

6 WHEREAS, Irvin L. Whittaker was born into a share-cropping
7 family on a plantation in Carroll County, the only boy among seven
8 sisters; and

9 WHEREAS, because there was no high school for black students
10 in the area, Irvin L. Whittaker had to live with relatives in
11 Jackson, Mississippi, to attend Lanier High School; and

12 WHEREAS, by 1959, Marshall High School had opened for black
13 students in Carrollton, and Irvin L. Whittaker came home to finish
14 high school; and

15 WHEREAS, Irvin L. Whittaker continued his education by
16 graduating from Mississippi Industrial College in Holly Springs,
17 Mississippi, with a Bachelor of Science degree in biological
18 science; Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Alabama, with a Master's
19 degree in secondary school administration; Delta State University
20 in Cleveland, Mississippi, with a Specialist degree in school
21 administration; and by completing 16 additional graduate hours in
22 school administration at the University of Mississippi,
23 Mississippi Valley State University and Jackson State University;
24 and

25 WHEREAS, Irvin L. Whittaker first began his education career
26 as a biology teacher at Old Salem High School in Ashland, and

after only one year, was offered a job as the principal of Marshall High School, his alma mater; and

WHEREAS, in 1968, after four years as principal of Marshall High School, Irvin L. Whittaker went to Leflore County to become the assistant principal at Amanda Elzy High School, and in 1970, Whittaker was moved to the formerly all-white Leflore County High School as massive integration began; and

WHEREAS, Whittaker spent eight years at Leflore County and returned to Amanda Elzy as principal for another five years before being appointed assistant superintendent, holding that position for eight years, before running for the superintendent's job; and

WHEREAS, Irvin L. Whittaker was one of 55 school administrators selected nationwide to be trained by the National Association of Secondary School Principals in secondary school improvement in 1968-1969; and

WHEREAS, the academic progress in the schools during Whittaker's two terms as superintendent of Leflore County Schools may not have been as great as he would have liked, it has been steady and measurable; and

WHEREAS, Irvin L. Whittaker, a bear of a man, has matched his imposing physical presence with a dedication to providing a better future for his students, trying to instill in them the same love for learning that transformed him from a sharecropper's son to a county superintendent of education; and

WHEREAS, Whittaker, both inside and outside education circles, has been a bridge-builder between the races and is well liked and respected across racial and economic lines; and

WHEREAS, Irvin L. Whittaker is married to the former Minnie E. Moore, and they have nine children; and

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

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commend Irvin L. Whittaker upon his retirement as Leflore County Superintendent of Education, and wish him success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be furnished to Irvin L. Whittaker and made available to the Capitol

64 Press Corps.