

By: Senator(s) Carmichael, Burton, Horhn,
Williamson, Chaney, Hyde-Smith, Johnson
(19th), Little

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 554

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING MERIDIAN,
2 MISSISSIPPI'S SELA WARD FOR HER NUMEROUS ACTING AWARDS AND CREDITS
3 AND COMMENDING HER FOR SUPPORTING THE HOPE FOR CHILDREN FACILITY
4 FOR CHILDREN AND OTHER CIVIC PROJECTS.

5 WHEREAS, Meridian, Mississippi's Sela Ward received her
6 second Emmy Award for Best Actress in Drama for her portrayal of
7 Lily Manning on ABC's critically acclaimed dramatic series "Once
8 And Again," which has also garnered her two Golden Globe
9 nominations; and

10 WHEREAS, Ward, married to a Los Angeles businessman (Howard
11 Sherman) and a mother of two, savors her singular role
12 representing "fortysomething" women in America, and on vacations,
13 the whole family goes off to their 280-acre ranch near Meridian,
14 Mississippi, where the rustic lifestyle is a perfect contrast to
15 the family's life in California; and

16 WHEREAS, growing up in Meridian, the former cheerleader moved
17 to Memphis to do public relations work for Pepsi, began a highly
18 successful career as a model, and turned to acting at age 27; she
19 moved to Los Angeles in 1983 and got her big break in the Burt
20 Reynolds' film "The Man Who Loved Women"; and

21 WHEREAS, Ward was last seen on the big screen in Mark
22 Christopher's "54" for Miramax; on television, Ward most recently
23 starred in Showtime's "Rescuers Stories of Courage - Two Women";
24 Ward won an Emmy Award for Best Actress in a Drama in 1994 for her
25 role as Teddy, the struggling artist and recovering alcoholic, on
26 NBC's award-winning series, "Sisters," and was nominated as
27 "Outstanding Female Actor in a Drama Series" by the Screen Actors
28 Guild in 1996. Ward also received unanimous acclaim for her
29 performance in the Lifetime original film "Almost Golden: The
30 Jessica Savitch Story," portraying the late NBC News anchorwoman;
31 the film ranks as Lifetime's highest rated movie, and the second
32 highest rated movie in cable history. Ward's performance earned
33 her a Cable Ace Award for "Outstanding Actress in a Television
34 Movie, Mini-Series or Special" in 1996. She also received a

35 Screen Actors Guild nomination for "Best Actress in a Television
36 Movie or Mini-Series," as well as an Emmy nomination for "Best
37 Actress Lead in a Television Movie, Mini-Series or Special"; and

38 WHEREAS, on the big screen, Ward has appeared in the Warner
39 Brothers' blockbuster "The Fugitive" opposite Harrison Ford and
40 Tommy Lee Jones. Other films include "My Fellow Americans" with
41 Jack Lemmon, James Garner, Dan Ackroyd and Lauren Bacall; "Hello
42 Again" with Shelley Long and Gabriel Byrne; Garry Marshall's
43 "Nothing in Common" opposite Tom Hanks and Jackie Gleason;
44 "Rustler's Rhapsody" with Tom Berenger; Ward's additional
45 television credits include the telefilms "The Reef," "Double
46 Jeopardy," "Killer Rules," "The Haunting of Sarah Hardy" and
47 "Bridesmaids," the ABC mini-series "King of Love," a regular role
48 on the CBS series "Emerald Point, N.A.S.," and appearances on
49 "L.A. Law," "Night Court" and "Saturday Night Live," as well as a
50 recent guest spot on the critically acclaimed situation comedy
51 "Frasier"; and

52 WHEREAS, Sela's generosity and support for her Mississippi
53 community is a matter of record: HOPE FOR CHILDREN: Sela has
54 provided funding and management effort to this project, a
55 residential facility for children with special needs; Hope for
56 Children was able to purchase the Masonic Home due to Sela's
57 relationship with the Entertainment Industry Foundation; this
58 grant from the Entertainment Industry Foundation will not only
59 purchase the property, but will pay for the renovations; Sela's
60 guidance in this project has encouraged individuals that would not
61 have participated without her; Sela's vision for this organization
62 goes well beyond opening a shelter for children in Meridian, but
63 to developing a blueprint that can be used by communities
64 throughout the United States "Rethinking the Orphanage"; OPERA
65 HOUSE: Sela became interested in this project years ago; she has
66 been obsessed with this "entombed jewel box" since she first saw
67 photos when she was doing a school project at eight years old; it
68 has been her dream to see such an important part of Mississippi's
69 history restored; she engaged and challenged the community to save
70 this treasure and became the energy in this project enlisting many
71 others including Trent Lott, Mack Portera and Chip Pickering; she
72 has been the catalyst in this project from the very beginning;
73 Sela has worked tirelessly on local, state and national funding,
74 and in a few short years, Meridian will have a renovated Grand
75 Opera House, Riley Educational Center and a 500-car downtown
76 parking garage; DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION: Sela has participated in
77 recapturing downtown Meridian's revitalization, not only with the
78 Opera House, but also with private ventures that will bring an
79 excitement to the area; she has worked tirelessly not only
80 creating public investment but to create private investment that
81 will bring new jobs to the downtown area; ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:
82 Sela has worked with many different projects in this area to
83 create an energy and culture that would encourage investment in
84 our state as well as this community; she gave instant credibility
85 to Meridian's presentation for the Southern Arts and Entertainment
86 Project; this effort is helping to change the image of both the
87 state and the community; she has offered her help and assistance
88 in attracting new economic opportunities for the future
89 generations; and

90 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we recognize the
91 professional achievements and civic dedication of this famous
92 Mississippi actress, who has brought honor to her home community
93 and to the State of Mississippi:

94 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
95 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
96 we do hereby congratulate Meridian, Mississippi's Sela Ward for
97 her numerous acting awards and credits, commend her for supporting
98 the Hope for Children facility for children and other civic
99 projects in Meridian, and wish her continued success in her
100 professional career and in her charitable projects.

101 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be
102 presented to Sela Ward and her family and be made available to the
103 Capitol Press Corps.