SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO.  557

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING GEORGE
BERRY OF PEARL, MISSISSIPPI, UPON HIS RECEIPT OF THE 2001 ARTIST'S
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD OF THE GOVERNOR'S AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE
ARTS.

WHEREAS, George Berry of Pearl, Mississippi, is the 2001
recipient of the Artist's Achievement Award of the Governor's
Awards for Excellence in the Arts; and

WHEREAS, George Berry has been carving wood since the age of
seven, when his father taught him how to handle a knife; and

WHEREAS, he is known for his distinctive carvings of animals
which he creates using a pocketknife, and he exhibits his work and
demonstrates woodcarving throughout the South and Southwest; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Berry has been an influential traditional artist
in Mississippi since moving here from his native Oklahoma in 1972
to teach at the Piney Woods School; and

WHEREAS, a 1999 recipient of the Mississippi Arts Commission
Folk Art Fellowship, his works are in museums and private
collections from Maine to Oklahoma; he has been featured on
Mississippi ETV, area television and radio programs and in
numerous national publications; in 1996 and 1997, Mr. Berry was
the commissioned artist for the Governor's Awards for Excellence
in the Arts; with a woodcarving career that spans more than 50
years, he is a charter member and Fellow of the Craftsmen's Guild
of Mississippi and a recipient of the Guild's highest award for
Lifetime Achievement and Professional Accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, a self-taught artist, Mr. Berry has a strong
commitment to artistic excellence and delights in sharing his art
form with others; he taught his children a love and respect for woodcarving and is now passing this on to his grandchildren and hundreds of other children as he travels the state each year presenting woodcarving demonstrations and workshops; Mr. Berry also teaches weekly woodcarving classes for the Craftsmen's Guild; Mr. Berry prefers to carve and whittle with a simple pocketknife, using no other tools or equipment; he still carves many nights past midnight and as late as 3:00 a.m. on weekends; Mr. Berry is rarely without his favorite pocketknife and a sturdy twig or two that in a few seconds he can transform into a bouquet of delicately shaved flowers for an impromptu audience, because most of all, George Berry is a woodcarver who loves to carve:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby commend and congratulate George Berry upon his receipt of the 2001 Artist's Achievement Award of the Governor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts, and wish him continued success in his future artistic endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be presented to George Berry and his family at the Awards Ceremony to be held on Friday, February 9, 2001, and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.