SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 586

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE CAREER OF DR. A.B. BRITTON, PIONEER FOR HEALTH CARE AND CIVIL RIGHTS IN MISSISSIPPI.

WHEREAS, Dr. A.B. Britton of Jackson, Mississippi, saw his first patient in 1948 in his Farish Street office building that bears his name; and

WHEREAS, he has since become a health care pioneer in the black community, a civil rights leader and a man of vision; and

WHEREAS, he can describe the last minutes of the life of storied human rights activist, Medgar Evers, who acknowledged his presence in the emergency room before expiring; and

WHEREAS, Mississippi born, raised in Jackson, educated in New Orleans and Washington, D.C. (Howard University), the physician has spent a lifetime serving medicine and society simultaneously, cutting through "white paper" red tape and racial barriers with one hand and birthing babies with the other; and

WHEREAS, he has held office with and/or served on the Civil Rights Commission and virtually every one of the state's most prestigious medical organizations, as well as Mississippi branches of national physicians' groups; and

WHEREAS, in the 1950s and 1960s, Britton was at the forefront of the integration of Baptist, St. Dominic's and Hinds General (now Central Mississippi Medical Center) hospitals; and

WHEREAS, his imprint is on the cornerstone of a nurse-midwifery school at University Medical Center (only the third such school in the nation) and, under his leadership, more than one Head Start program has gotten a leg up; and
WHEREAS, during the volatile 1960s, an era rife with demonstrations, Britton was also a key player on the lines of confrontation; and

WHEREAS, the doctor's forays into the world of politics placed him in circles with the likes of Robert Kennedy, with whom he became friends; he recalls once telling Kennedy that he didn't have to travel to the Delta to witness poverty in Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, the doctor's testimonials have been recorded in the Library of Congress, and for years, Britton's health records were used as a national and state barometer for illnesses affecting the poor; and

WHEREAS, the son of a Methodist minister who was born in 1865, the doctor says, "My people were here before the state was even formed"; and

WHEREAS, these days, Britton attends to patients four days a week in his office of 53 years, motoring down a street that sports an official "Historic District" banner; and

WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we recognize the accomplishments of this Mississippian whose leadership in the field of medical education and race relations is a matter of record:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby commend the career of Dr. A.B. Britton of Jackson, Mississippi, pioneer for health care and civil rights in Mississippi, and wish him and his family continued success in their future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be presented to Dr. Britton and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.