

By: Senator(s) Horhn, Furniss, Williamson,
Smith, Dearing, Nunnelee, Farris, Little,
Hamilton, Thames, Johnson (19th), Tollison,
Ross

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 608

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE FRIENDS OF WILLIE
2 MORRIS ORGANIZATION FOR HONORING THE WORK OF THIS FAMOUS
3 MISSISSIPPIAN AND DECLARING MAY 12, 2001, AS "WILLIE MORRIS DAY."

4 WHEREAS, William Weaks Morris was born in 1934 in Jackson,
5 Mississippi, but when he was six months old his parents moved to
6 Yazoo City, a small town located, as he writes in *North Toward*
7 *Home*, "on the edge of the Delta, straddling that memorable divide
8 where the hills end and the flat land begins"; and

9 WHEREAS, Willie Morris died August 2, 1999, having nearly
10 finished his latest work, a project with his son about his home
11 state's rich history and future; and

12 WHEREAS, to carry on the work Willie began, uniting
13 established writers with aspiring writers, and under the auspices
14 of the Yazoo Arts and Cultural Alliance and the Mississippi
15 Humanities Council, a cadre of friends and supporters has been
16 established called the "Friends of Willie Morris," who this year
17 are hosting a special event on May 12, 2001, to be held in Yazoo
18 City, Mississippi, called "Remembering Willie: A Yazoo
19 Celebration" which will bring together many of Willie Morris'
20 boyhood friends, his literary colleagues and his admirers, as well
21 as others touched by his generous heart and evocative prose; and

22 WHEREAS, the program participants for this inaugural event
23 are as follows: William Dunlap, artist, Washington, D.C.; David
24 Halbertstam, author, New York City; Rick Bragg, author and *New*
25 *York Times* feature writer, New Orleans; Will Campbell, humorist;
26 Ed Yoder, author; Curtis Wilkie, journalist and author, New
27 Orleans; Larry L. King, author, Washington, D.C.; Jack Bales,

28 biographer and research librarian, Mary Washington College; Ruth
29 Tuttle Williams, author, Jackson, Mississippi; John Horhn,
30 Mississippi State Senator; Melanie Musgrove, Mississippi's First
31 Lady; Rick Cleveland, author and sports columnist, *The*
32 *Clarion-Ledger*, Jackson, Mississippi; Jerry Ward, poet and
33 Professor of English, Tougaloo College; Rod Barnes, Head
34 Basketball Coach, University of Mississippi; Ellen Douglas,
35 author, Jackson, Mississippi; Jill Conner Browne, author, Jackson,
36 Mississippi; Bobby DeLaughter, author and Judge, Jackson,
37 Mississippi; Mike Espy, attorney, former Congressman and U.S.
38 Secretary of Agriculture; David Sansing, Professor Emeritus of
39 History, University of Mississippi; Wardell Leach, Mayor of Yazoo
40 City; and childhood friends of Willie Morris; and

41 WHEREAS, Willie Morris attained national prominence in his
42 career as a journalist, nonfiction writer, novelist, editor and
43 essayist, and is particularly well known for the books and
44 articles in which he compares his experiences and his long and
45 complex southern heritage to America's own history, and it is with
46 great pride that we announce this Mississippi event which
47 celebrates the legacy of one of Mississippi's most famous authors,
48 and recognize the contributions of friends and volunteers which
49 make an event like this possible:

50 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
51 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
52 we do hereby commend the Friends of Willie Morris organization and
53 all other involved support groups for hosting this inaugural
54 special event honoring the life of Mississippi writer Willie
55 Morris, and declare May 12, 2001, to be "Willie Morris Day" in
56 Mississippi, and commend this event to all participants and
57 encourage these dedicated volunteers to make this an annual event
58 honoring Mississippi's rich literary culture.

59 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be
60 presented to the family of Willie Morris, the Mayor of Yazoo City,

61 Mississippi, the Friends of Willie Morris organization and the
62 Mississippi Humanities Council and be made available to the
63 Capitol Press Corps.