

By: Senator(s) Horhn

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 53

1 A RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE CAREER OF DAVID J. DENNIS, A
2 LEADER IN THE FIELD OF STUDENT LITERACY.

3 WHEREAS, President and CEO of Positive Innovations, Inc., and
4 Project Director for The Southern Initiative of the Algebra
5 Project, Inc., Mr. David J. Dennis is a cum laude graduate of
6 Dillard University, New Orleans, Louisiana, and received his Juris
7 Doctorate from the University of Michigan Law School; and

8 WHEREAS, he was involved in the practice of law before
9 becoming associated with the Algebra Project, a mathematics
10 literacy program designed to increase the proportion of urban,
11 inner city and rural students who complete algebra and higher
12 level mathematics, enter college and later become leading
13 contributors to the progress of their communities and society; and

14 WHEREAS, since joining the Algebra Project in 1991, he has
15 drawn on the organizing experiences of the 1960's to develop and
16 implement a regional concept to support the activities of the
17 project in 16 southern sites located in six states - Mississippi,
18 Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, South Carolina and North Carolina.
19 During the 1998-1999 year, these sites included 15 school
20 districts, 45 participating schools and 98 teachers who provided
21 instruction to over 4,000 students. This regional model has
22 yielded many positive results - the connectedness brought on by
23 collaborative efforts has (1) enhanced local capacity among and
24 between stakeholders and programs at the respective sites; (2)
25 maximized their use of funding sources; and (3) helped to develop
26 models of professional development, community development and

27 youth initiatives. These models have evolved from the
28 philosophical premise that "there can be no school reform without
29 community reform" (David Dennis). The common denominator which
30 drives the efforts in the south and which is the basis for this
31 philosophical underpinning is the children, i.e., the young people
32 at stake. They become the driving force around which all
33 activities are focused and provide the necessary common ground
34 within the various communities. This model for community reform
35 aimed at school reform continues to be proven as an effective
36 method for creating a community of stakeholders who
37 collaboratively create solutions to problems involving students as
38 they attempt to navigate the many obstacles in their continuing
39 struggle for citizenship and equality; and

40 WHEREAS, in addition to his work in the south, Mr. Dennis has
41 been actively involved in the formation of the National Algebra
42 Project and is often a guest speaker, conducting informational
43 workshops throughout the country; he has been written about and
44 interviewed in numerous publications, films and documentaries; and

45 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we recognize the
46 accomplishments and dedicated service in the field of literacy to
47 students in the State of Mississippi and in the South:

48 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
49 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commend the career of David J.
50 Dennis, a leader in the field of student and adult literacy, and
51 wish him continued success as he assists the State of Mississippi
52 in the field of education reform.

53 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be
54 furnished to David J. Dennis and be made available to the Capitol
55 Press Corps.