SENATE RESOLUTION NO.  60

A RESOLUTION WELCOMING THE NIGERIAN-EDO STATE DELEGATION
PARTICIPATING IN THE LEGISLATIVE ORIENTATION AND DEMOCRACY
STRENGTHENING PROGRAM AND EXTENDING THE BEST WISHES OF THE SENATE.

WHEREAS, we in the Senate have been honored in the final
weeks of the 2001 Regular Session by the presence of a
distinguished delegation of legislators and public officials from
the State of Edo, Nigeria, who are participating in a MCID/United
States State Department sponsored legislative strengthening
program for Nigerian governmental leaders; and

WHEREAS, this program consists of a governmental study tour
of representative operations in the United States, including the
Mississippi Legislature; and

WHEREAS, EDO State was created in 1991 out of the former
Bendel State. Edo State is bounded in the south by Delta State,
in the west by Ondo State, in the north by Kogi State and in the
east by Kogi and Anambra States. It occupies a land area of about
17,802 square kilometers. From the 1991 census the state has a
population of 2,159,848. The original request for the creation of
Edo State was presented to the National Assembly in Lagos on July
16, 1981, by a delegation headed by the Oba of Benin, Omo n'Oba
Erediauwa. A steering committee had earlier been set up to work
out proposals for the state's creation. Bendel State was one of
the oldest political entities in Nigeria, having started out life
as the Midwest Region created by referendum August 9, 1963, and
excised from the then-Western Region, it then became known as
Midwest State, and then as Bendel State (a contraction of the
phrase BENin DELta). As time went on, the "federal character"
provision for the sharing of federal revenue amongst the states in the Federation was hampering the growth and development of the state. Although the demand for the creation of the state did not come to fruition in the Second Republic, this demand led the Babangida regime to split the then Bendel State into two parts -- one which had an Edo-speaking majority (Edo State), and the other which had a more heterogeneous mix of ethnic groups (Delta State). With the creation of Edo State, the dream of the Edo-speaking peoples and other groups in the territory for a separate identity and entity was finally fulfilled; and

WHEREAS, Edo State is one of the more homogenous states in Nigeria. The cultural and linguistic affinities that exist among the various groups in the state points to this fact. A lot of the communities in the state trace their roots to the ancient kingdom of Benin. Customs, burial rites, diet and traditional modes of dress tend to be similar throughout the state. The political pattern and behavior were based on a system under which both monarchial and republican ideas flourished in an integrated manner. The monarchial (or chieftaincy) system revolved largely on primogeniture, while the republican element was reflected in the free selection by villages and communities of elders; and

WHEREAS, the Edo State list of participants is as follows:

**MCID/USAID SPONSORED**

51 M.E. Egbadon Speaker and Chairman SWC
52 I.O. Pally Iriase Deputy Speaker
53 Dauda Abu Legislator
54 Elizabeth Ighodaro (Mrs.) Legislator
55 Esohe Jacobs (Mrs.) Legislator
56 David Iyoha Legislator
57 Victor Edos Ebomoyi Commissioner for Information, Youths and Sports
59 Herbertta Okonofua-Ayu (Mrs.) Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development
ST: Nigerian-EDO State legislative delegation; welcome to Mississippi.

Osagie Ize-Iyamu
Chief of Staff, Govt. House, Edo State
Egbe Evbuomwan
Director, Legislative Matters, Edo State

EDO STATE SPONSORED

Peter Ekhator
Legislator
Samson Osagie
Legislator
Benjamin Olajina
Legislator
Akhere Ugbesia
Legislator
Fatima Akinbami (Mrs.)
Judge of the High Court of Edo State

WHEREAS, the Governor of Edo State, the Honorable Governor Chief Lucky Igbinedion, is a graduate of Jackson State University, which gives our Capitol a special tie to this delegation; and

WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we recognize the participation of these respected officials from a visiting state who have shown their interest in our Mississippi Legislature and who are in the process of organizing their own democratic government:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby welcome the Edo State, Nigeria, delegation participating in the Legislative Orientation and Democracy Strengthening Program and extend the best wishes of the Mississippi Senate as these respected public officials implement the democratization of their republic.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be presented to the Honorable Governor Lucky Igbinedion, the Honorable M.E. Egbadon, Speaker and Chairman of the SWC, and the Honorable Fatima Adinbami, Judge of the High Court of Edo State, and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.