A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING THE
STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES' LONGTIME EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR, DR. OLON RAY, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT AFTER 40
YEARS OF DEDICATED PUBLIC SERVICE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION.

WHEREAS, Dr. Olon E. Ray announced plans of retirement from
his position as Executive Director of the State Board for
Community and Junior Colleges; and

WHEREAS, since October 1, 1990, Dr. Ray has been Executive
Director of the State Board for Community and Junior Colleges,
working with a ten-member board in the coordination of the state's
15 public community and junior colleges, overseeing and executing
the policies of the board and other programs specified by statutes
of Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, under his leadership the board has experienced an
unprecedented growth in the numbers of students served, from
48,306 to 53,669, and an increase in its budget from approximately
$72 million to $187 million; and

WHEREAS, after receiving his bachelor's degree in 1962, from
the University of Mississippi, Dr. Ray began his professional work
in education as a history teacher at Biloxi High School, remaining
until 1964, when he left in order to teach at Jackson Central High
School for one year before returning to Biloxi to begin
administrative work as Assistant to the Superintendent; and

WHEREAS, named Assistant Superintendent of the Biloxi Public
School District in 1970, Dr. Ray became Superintendent of the
district in 1975, serving 13 years before resigning in 1988, to
accept the position of Special Assistant for Education in the
Governor's Office, under the administration of Governor Ray Mabus,
where he remained for two years before accepting his present position; and

WHEREAS, while Superintendent of the Biloxi schools, Dr. Ray was appointed by Governor William Winter to serve as Chairman of the Performance-Based School Accreditation Task Force of Mississippi, created by the State Legislature under the Education Act of 1982, implementing for the first time in the history of American education, school accreditation tied to educational performance of students in certain critical areas; and

WHEREAS, as Special Assistant for Education to Governor Ray Mabus, Dr. Ray attended, as the Assistant to the Governor, President George Bush's 1989 Summit on Education, in Charlottesville, Virginia, participated and contributed to the National Governors Association Advisory Committee on National Goals in 1989 and 1990, and helped develop, prepare and pass the legislation known by the title "Mississippi's BEST"; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ray's selected civil and professional awards and honors include: Outstanding Educational Administrator of Mississippi, 1976; Mississippi Man of the Year Award, 1989; Harrison County United Way Leadership Award, 1971; Outstanding Young Man of Biloxi, 1972; Boss of the Year, 1982; Chairman, Biloxi Bicentennial Commission, 1976; President, Harrison County United Way, 1983; District Governor, Lions International; appointed member of the State of Mississippi Parole Board, 1977; Mississippi Community Education Award, 1982; Chairman, Education Committee, Mississippi Economic Council, 1982; Ed Ransdell Media Award, 1984; Outstanding Alumni for Louisiana, Mississippi District, January 1996; Phi Theta Kappa Board for Directors Alumni Award, April 1995; and MAACE Friend of Education Award, June 1995; and

WHEREAS, a native Mississippian, Dr. Ray received his formal education in the public school system, graduated from Weir High School, and attended Northwest Mississippi Community College
before earning degrees from the University of Mississippi and the
University of Southern Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ray is married to the former Ann Traylor, of
Sumrall, Mississippi, who has remained faithful in the support of
his every endeavor; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to acknowledge
greatness in such outstanding Mississippians as Dr. Ray, whose
legacy of service and longtime oversight in the field of public
education and in state government has been greatly appreciated by
the citizens of this state:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING
THEREIN, That we do hereby commend and congratulate State Board
for Community and Junior Colleges longtime Executive Director, Dr.
Olon Ray, on the occasion of his retirement after 40 years of
dedicated public service, and wish him and his wife, Ann, the best
as he returns to private life.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be
furnished to Dr. Olon Ray, the State Board for Community and
Junior Colleges and the Capitol Press Corps.