HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 98

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE OF MR. CALVIN BRUCE GURNER AND EXPRESSING DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS FAMILY AND FRIENDS UPON HIS PASSING.

WHEREAS, Mr. Calvin Bruce Gurner departed this life on February 18, 2002, causing great sorrow and loss to his family and friends; and

WHEREAS, a native of Water Valley, Mississippi, Mr. Gurner was born January 1, 1920, to Mr. B.G. and Mrs. Jane Gurner; and

WHEREAS, attending the Water Valley public school system, Mr. Gurner graduated from Water Valley High School in 1936, and attended Holmes Junior College in Goodman before going to Paducah, Kentucky, where he became a machinist apprentice with Illinois Central Railroad's locomotive shop; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gurner became a fireman in 1941, working there until joining the Army Air Corps later in that year, spending a majority of his service with the 11th Weather Squadron in the Aleutian Islands; and

WHEREAS, after the war's end, Mr. Gurner returned to Kentucky, working the Kentucky Division of Illinois Central Railroad until 1945, when he took leave to enter the University of Mississippi, earning his bachelor's degree in geology in 1948, and later earning his master's degree in education; and

WHEREAS, teaching at University High School and Oxford High School while working on the railroad during summers and holidays, Mr. Gurner decided to railroad full time from 1965 to 1967, being promoted to engineer in 1966 before returning to the educational setting as a guidance counselor at Charleston in 1967; and
WHEREAS, Mr. Gurner, whose interest in railroading began in the late 1920s, began the hobby of collecting railroad memorabilia in 1955, when the Water Valley depot was being torn down; and

WHEREAS, upon discovering 92 train sheets listing the famous railroader, Casey Jones, Mr. Gurner spent the next 50 years researching the legend and the Mississippi Division of the Illinois Central Railroad, which was headquartered in Water Valley; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gurner, throughout the 1970s was active in many historical projects, compiling information for the Yalobusha County History book and also a book of his own entitled "Casey Jones and the Wreck at Vaughn"; and

WHEREAS, an avid outdoorsman and Yalobusha County's Veteran's Administration representative for 12 years, Mr. Gurner joined the First Baptist Church of Water Valley in 1939, and taught the men's Bible class for more than 45 years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Gurner married the former Betty Jo Evans on May 6, 1950, and to their sacred union, six children were born: Bill Gurner, Hugh Gurner, Richard Gurner, Melissa Gurner Burrell, Robert Gurner and Joe Gurner; and

WHEREAS, the memories of Mr. Gurner will continue to live on in the hearts of his loving and devoted wife, six children, twelve grandchildren and three great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to pay special tribute to the life of such an outstanding individual as Mr. Calvin Bruce Gurner, whose historical contributions to the people of Water Valley and Yalobusha County has had a profound impact on the lives of many:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby commend the life of Mr. Calvin Bruce Gurner and extend our deepest sympathy to his family and friends upon his passing.

H. C. R. No. 98
02/HR07/R2106
PAGE 2 (DJ\HS)
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be furnished to the family of Mr. Calvin Bruce Gurner and the members of the Capitol Press Corps.