HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 80

A RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF MR. WILLIAM H. "BILLY" CREEL AND EXPRESSING OUR Deepest SYMPATHY TO HIS FAMILY AND FRIENDS UPON HIS PASSING.

WHEREAS, Mr. William H. "Billy" Creel, a native of Biloxi, Mississippi, departed this life on Saturday, March 30, 2002, causing a great loss to his family and friends; and

WHEREAS, the youngest of six brothers, Mr. Creel began his career in the hospitality industry in 1963 as a bellman at the Buena Vista Hotel and eventually worked his way up to front office manager; and

WHEREAS, in 1965, Mr. Creel was recruited by the Broadwater Beach Hotel, the premier property of the Gulf Coast at that time, where he worked for 10 years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Creel became general manager of the Biloxi Hilton when it opened adjacent to the Broadwater in 1977, remaining the next 18 years, keeping the franchise afloat in a nationwide recession and eventual bankruptcy; and

WHEREAS, after 30 years of experience in the hospitality industry, Mr. Creel was first hired by the Isle of Capri Casino in their marketing department, soon after to be promoted to Director of Community Development and Special Events and eventually Senior Director of Operations; and

WHEREAS, as a 19-year member of the Harrison County Tourism Commission and former member of the Mississippi Coast Coliseum Commission, Mr. Creel established himself as a constant and effective voice for the Coast with state legislators and state tourism leaders; and
WHEREAS, as a result of his many accomplishments, the
Harrison County Tourism Commission and other community leaders in
1997, recognized Mr. Creel as "Mr. Gulf Coast Tourism" and
established an award, the "Billy Creel Tourism Award," to annually
recognize local individuals for outstanding service to the local
tourism industry; and

WHEREAS, in addition, Mr. Creel was recognized by Biloxi
Mayor A.J. Holloway with the first-ever "Spirit of Biloxi Award"
in recognition of his many contributions to the success of
Biloxi's tourism industry; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Creel has also received several other awards,
including his selection as Hotel Manager of the Year in 1990 by
the Mississippi Hotel-Motel Association; awarded the Cy Burnett
Award for outstanding service to the hotel-motel industry by the
Mississippi Hotel-Motel Association in 1994; and was named as a
delegate to the White House Conference on Travel and Tourism in
1995; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the House of Representatives to
recognize and pay special tribute to outstanding Mississippians
such as Mr. Creel, who dedicated his life to improving the tourism
industry on the Gulf Coast of Mississippi:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby
commend the life and accomplishments of Mr. William H. "Billy"
Creel and express our deepest sympathy to his family and friends
upon his passing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
furnished to the family of Mr. William H. Creel and to the members
of the Capitol Press Corps.