SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 579

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO COMMEND DR. JAYNE SARGENT UPON THE OCCASION OF HER IMPENDING RETIREMENT AS SUPERINTENDENT OF THE JACKSON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT.

WHEREAS, Dr. Jayne Sargent, Superintendent of the Jackson Public School District since 1997, is the first woman to hold that post; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Sargent has announced her retirement after five years as head of the 32,000 student district, effective June 30, 2002; and

WHEREAS, she has spent the bulk of her 35-year public education career in Jackson; and

WHEREAS, a 1967 graduate of Tougaloo College, Dr. Sargent worked two years in the library at Jackson State University, moving in 1969 to be a Jackson Public Schools librarian for Boyd and McLeod Elementary Schools; and

WHEREAS, eight years later she became Assistant Principal at Callaway High School, then served as Principal at Powell Middle School and later Jim Hill High School; and

WHEREAS, Meridian schools hired her away from Jackson as Assistant Superintendent in 1991, and she was promoted to Superintendent during her tenure in Meridian; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Superintendent Ron Sellers has praised Dr. Sargent, saying, "She is a woman of faith. What that comes across as, is compassion to help people"; and

WHEREAS, Sargent's retirement comes as a double loss for the State of Mississippi, because, with her retirement, she will also resign her school administrator position on the State Board of
Education where, State Superintendent of Education Richard Thompson says, her calm perspective will be missed; and

WHEREAS, among her many accomplishments in Jackson are: an aggressive building program financed through state or federal funds or school district loans; a district testing program for third and sixth graders to determine whether students can pass to the next grade; and the Morrison Academic Advancement Center for eighth-graders who need a boost to catch up on academics; and

WHEREAS, she is perhaps best known for her commitment to academic excellence; and

WHEREAS, Sargent has shepherded the district through a series of state and local budget problems, never wavering in her commitment to the task at hand; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Sargent's deep and abiding love for the children of the district have guided her vision for the public schools; and

WHEREAS, she credits much of her success to the example of her parents. The only child of a school-teacher mom and a hard-working father, she was expected to do well in school, and did, acquiring a life-long love of learning in the process; and

WHEREAS, she is widely regarded as having done a tremendous job as superintendent, with her greatest accomplishment being the restoration of the public's confidence in Jackson Public Schools; and

WHEREAS, she has been an icon of confidence and strength and has always brought credit to the school district; and

WHEREAS, one of her great talents is to inspire good people at the school-building level to do their best and not be afraid to think out-of-the-box to create new programs and find innovative solutions to problems; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to recognize the contributions to the quality of life in this state made by dedicated citizens, and especially those who work with the youth of this state, who are the future:
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby recognize and commend Dr. Jayne Sargent for her outstanding career as an educator, and extend to her the Legislature's congratulations upon her upcoming retirement with the thanks of a grateful state for her devotion to learning and love of the students she has served.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be presented to Dr. Sargent, the Jackson Public School District and the Capitol Press Corps.