SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 599

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND MEMORIALIZING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF WILLIE "JOE" YUNG, A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN AND ESTEEMED CITIZEN OF THE COMMUNITY OF RENA LARA, MISSISSIPPI, FOR OVER 37 YEARS.

WHEREAS, Willie "Joe" Yung was born Wing Heap Yung in the Village of Nan Fu Liao, County of Xin Hui, Province of Guang Dong, China on September 23, 1895; and

WHEREAS, at age 14, Willie traveled to Canada with his father and worked at various jobs for a number of years; and

WHEREAS, after six years in Canada, Willie returned to his village in China and married his childhood sweetheart, Zhao Ru Xing; and

WHEREAS, during the next several years, Willie and his wife had three children as Willie traveled from China to and from Canada to work and provide for his family; and

WHEREAS, Willie's two youngest children died at an early age (a newborn son, and Yew Yee Yung at age 17); and

WHEREAS, about 1930, Willie left his family in China, went to Canada, and then to the small community of Rena Lara, Mississippi, where he had the opportunity to purchase and operate his own community general grocery store; and

WHEREAS, Willie operated his grocery store in Rena Lara for over 37 years, sending money on a regular basis to support his family in China; and

WHEREAS, during his 37 years at Rena Lara, Willie became a well-respected successful businessman, a strong, positive supporter of the community, and a faithful and active member of Rena Lara Baptist Church; and
WHEREAS, during his many years at Rena Lara, Willie was many things to many people. He was a real friend and a good neighbor. But to many he was much more than that. To some he was a banker--cashing checks, lending money to pay farm workers in order to save a trip to town, giving credit for supplies and even lending money to make crops. To others he was a provider--giving credit for groceries and household needs, sometimes paying utility bills for neighbors before the "cut-off" man came. And quite often he could be seen feeding people who happened in around noon and had not eaten. And to all he was the Good Samaritan--always helping anybody at any place anytime; and

WHEREAS, Willie was also a great lover of children--contributing large sums to the Children's Bible School of Rena Lara Baptist Church and providing refreshments for many special occasions; and

WHEREAS, Willie greatly endeared himself to the citizens of Rena Lara and the surrounding area and was affectionately nicknamed "Joe"; and

WHEREAS, Willie, during his almost four decades at Rena Lara, was not able to tell his many friends about his family in Communist China for fear of endangering his safety and the safety of his family in China, but he continued to send his family members money on a regular basis, sometimes even having to smuggle it to them; and

WHEREAS, in 1958, Willie's wife died in China. Willie's remaining family consisted of his surviving son, Wah Sing Yung, Wah Sing's wife, Meikam Ng Yung and their six children; and

WHEREAS, on July 18, 1967, Willie "Joe" Yung retired, said good-bye to his many friends, and left Rena Lara for the last time; and

WHEREAS, Willie went to Hong Kong to visit members of his family who were able to come from China to visit; and
WHEREAS, Willie became ill and died in Hong Kong on April 16, 1981, at the age of 85. He was cremated in accordance with his wishes and years later his ashes were buried in Forrest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale, California; and

WHEREAS, Willie's son and daughter-in-law, and their six children now live in America and are American citizens and as many as are able plan to attend the Rena Lara Homecoming on Saturday, July 27, 2002; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the Legislature to recognize, commend and honor the lives and accomplishments of citizens of this state, and especially those who have given unselfish, dedicated, and exemplary service to their neighbors and communities:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby commend and memorialize the life and legacy of Willie "Joe" Yung, a successful businessman and esteemed citizen of the community of Rena Lara, Mississippi, for over 37 years.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That Senator Delma Furniss is hereby designated to represent this body in presenting this resolution to the family members of Willie "Joe" Yung on the occasion of a special program at the Rena Lara Homecoming to be held at Rena Lara, Mississippi on Saturday, July 27, 2002.