SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 50

A RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING MRS. JESSIE LEE BRYANT CLARK (DEAR) ON THE OCCASION OF HER 100TH BIRTHDAY AND FOR HER DEDICATED COMMUNITY SERVICES.

WHEREAS, Mrs. Jessie Lee Bryant Clark (Dear) was born on May 4, 1902, at Holly Bluff, Yazoo County, Mississippi. It was here that she spent her childhood and young adult life with her parents, William and Mary Elisha Bryant, and her 15 siblings. Her parents were farmers. Therefore, Jessie learned the kind of work and skills that contributed to survival in a time when hard work and thrift were essential; and

WHEREAS, she attended Bayland School where her daily walk provided the only opportunity that the State of Mississippi afforded people of color to acquire secondary schooling. A great deal of her training was obtained through the Sunday School and youth activities of her church. Her continuing education was obtained later as she monitored the homework and daily lessons of her seven children; and

WHEREAS, in 1924, she married Lee Andrew Clark, a minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The marriage generated a move from the Mississippi Delta with its rich black soil to the hills of Mississippi with its red clay. This move was one of the many moves made by Jessie during her lifetime. The next move was to Natchez, Adams County, Mississippi. Later, there were moves to Gulfport, Hattiesburg, Jackson, Benton and a final move to what would become the permanent home for the Clark family in Jackson, Mississippi. The family home was built at 1001 Randall Street; and
WHEREAS, Jessie lived the life of a minister's wife, raised her family and managed the home on the small income from the church. To make ends meet, she raised chickens, pigs and gardens, canned fruits and vegetables, and quilted quilts. She has quilted quite a few in her lifetime. Her quilts tell the story of dresses, pants and suits worn by family members over the years. Quilts quilted by her are in the homes of all the children, grandchildren and friends. Even though she says she will not quilt another one, there is a collection of quilting material being collected even as we speak; and

WHEREAS, Jessie is an active member of New Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Jackson, Mississippi. She attended Sunday School and worship services weekly as well as other scheduled services and meetings until recent health problems. Jessie is a member of the Sunday School, the Missionary Society and Stewardess Board #2. She serves as a consultant to the Missionary Society of the Eighth Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and she has served as a member of the Steward Board, the choir and the Lay Organization and is a former Sunday School Teacher. She is a member of the Minister's Wives Organization; and

WHEREAS, she has been recognized for her community services. She continues to mentor young people and to instill in them daily the moral values of Christianity. Her favorite scripture is the Twenty-Third Psalm, and her favorite song is "I want Jesus to Walk with Me"; and

WHEREAS, Dear's immediate family consisted of her husband, Reverend Lee Andrew Clark, Sr., and their seven children - four boys and three girls - Lee Andrew, Jr., Sidney Lawrence, Vester Lee, Annie Mary, Madison Columbus, Ethel Salenia and Howard William. She has 12 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren and four great-great grandchildren. Of course, her family now extends beyond this. It includes a sister, a sister-in-law,
daughters-in-law, sons-in-law, nieces, nephews, and other relatives and friends; and

WHEREAS, after her children were grown and when Jessie became a widow, she acquired a new hobby, traveling. She not only has the time to do so but has a very strong desire for it. One of her biggest thrills was to have gone West to the Pacific Ocean, East to the Atlantic Ocean, South to the Gulf of Mexico and North to Canada; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Clark attributes her longevity to God's blessings. She relies very much on God's guidance. "When I become weak," she says, "He just carries me on." Mrs. Clark further stated that she loves the Lord, the church and its works. To her, it was a great pleasure to raise her family and to support her husband in the work of the church:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commend and congratulate Mrs. Jessie Lee Bryant Clark (Dear) on the occasion of her 100th birthday and for her dedicated community services, and wish her the very best returns of the day and success in her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to Mrs. Clark and her family, and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.