SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 518

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE OF WELL-KNOWN GREENVILLE MUSICIAN, WRITER AND BUSINESSMAN KENNETH HAXTON, AND EXPRESSING THE SYMPATHY OF THE LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, it is with sadness that we note the passing of Kenneth Haxton who died on September 18, 2002, at age 82; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Haxton, a musician, writer and civic treasure, was born in Greenville, Mississippi, on October 20, 1919. He attended Greenville High School, where he was editor of the school paper, The Pica, and the school literary magazine, Thresholds. Despite his gift with words, music may have been his most important artistic endeavor; and

WHEREAS, a self-taught musician, he favored classical compositions and composed some 175 musical selections, ranging from organ solos to complete symphonic works. Many of his compositions are based upon literary works by notable Mississippi authors. In his circle of friends were such luminaries as Faulkner, Shelby Foote and Hodding Carter; and

WHEREAS, his most well-known musical composition is "The Sound and the Fury," based upon William Faulkner's work of the same title. The five-movement piece for contralto solo was completed in 1966 and was performed by the Greenville Symphony Orchestra in May 1982. Haxton's pieces have been performed in Greenville, Mississippi; Memphis, Tennessee; and throughout the State of Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, in addition to composing music, Haxton was also a supporter of the arts. While a student at Ole Miss, he and Hugh Alexander formed a group which would later become the Greenville
Symphony Orchestra. He graduated from Ole Miss in 1944, majoring in English; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Haxton was married to Josephine Ayres Haxton, better known as the critically acclaimed Mississippi author, Ellen Douglas, for 35 years. They had three sons, including former State Representative, Ayres Haxton; Brooks Haxton, a noted poet and Richard Haxton, a musician and teacher; and

WHEREAS, while a gifted artist, Mr. Haxton was also a businessman, and was involved in the founding of the Levee Press, a small company which published works by such authors as Faulkner and Shelby Foote. The press also published one of Haxton's novels, *The Undiscovered Country*. Among his many talents was one perhaps unheralded: he wrote crossword puzzles, some which have been published in *The New York Times*; and

WHEREAS, at one time Haxton was involved in the Rotary Club of Greenville, and served as president of the organization from 1941-1942. He also served as a communications officer in the United State's Navy during World War II, receiving the rank of Lieutenant before discharge; and

WHEREAS, Kenneth Haxton will surely be missed, but his legacy lives on in the love the people of the Mississippi Delta have for the region's rich literary and musical heritage:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby commend the life of well-known Greenville musician, writer, businessman and civic treasure, Kenneth Haxton, and express to his family the sympathy of the Legislature on his passing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to the surviving family of Kenneth Haxton and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.